BOND ST.

9/-

N/h.

T. L. C.

ST. ALBERT'S COLLEGE LIBRARY

SERMONS

DURING THE

SEASON FROM ADVENT TO WHITSUNTIDE.

BY THE

REV. E. B. PUSEY, D. D.,

REGIUS PROFESSOR OF HEBREW,

CANON OF CHRIST CHURCH, LATE FELLOW OF ORIEL COLLEGE.

GRADUATE THEOLOGICAL UNION LIBRARY
2400 RIDGE ROAD
BERKELEY, CA 94709

"O KNIT OUR HEARTS UNTO THEE,
THAT WE MAY FEAR THY NAME."

Second Edition.

OXFORD:

JOHN HENRY PARKER, AND 377, STRAND, LONDON;

SOLD ALSO BY MESSRS. F. AND J. RIVINGTON,

ST. PAUL'S CHURCHYARD, AND WATERLOO PLACE,

AND W. J. CLEAVER, BAKER STREET, PORTMAN SQUARE.

1848.

LITTLEMORE:
Printed by Alex. Ambrose Masson.

TO THE CONGREGATIONS

AMONG WHOM,

BY THE MERCY OF GOD,

THE WRITER HAS BEEN PERMITTED TO MINISTER,

These Sermons

ARE INSCRIBED,

IN AFFECTIONATE REMEMBRANCE,

AND WITH THE EARNEST PRAYER, THAT TO HAVE

MEDITATED TOGETHER ON

HOLY TRUTHS,

MAY, BY GOD'S GRACE,

TURN TO OUR GROWTH IN HOLINESS AND GRACE,

NOT

TO OUR CONDEMNATION.

14,248

ST. ALBERT'S COLLEGE LIBRARY

ADVERTISEMENT TO THE SECOND EDITION.

A FEW additional remarks become necessary, since some have understood the writer as though he thought the unhappy divisions among us were altogether in words only; and so, unintentionally, was encouraging indifference as to sacred truth. This, however, is contrary to what he said, when he spoke of "good and pious men having difficulties in receiving the full truth, as it is in Jesus," p. vi. What he meant to say, is what he has said these many years:—

1. That *religious* persons, who seem opposed to the truth, and often speak very unguardedly, unsoundly, and distressingly, do yet mostly believe much more truly than they speak. They believe what they cannot draw out in words, or would fear to express. Witness the great devotion at Holy Communion and careful preparation for It, among persons who really love their Saviour; and yet, it is only on the ground of the aweful greatness of that Mystery that we need to prepare more for It than for our ordinary prayers. Again, people would shrink from any irreverence as to the Consecrated Elements, who would yet, intellectually, argue in a very rationalistic way about them. And again, people speak almost as Antinomians, or as if Christians might almost more readily be saved without good works than with them, who yet are diligent

themselves to keep God's Commandments and "to perfect holiness in the fear of God." Or, again, they speak as if commands of the Church were not binding, and yet themselves obey such of them as they are accustomed to; or they dread "forms," and yet use them religiously.

2. *Religious* persons, holding partial truth, are very frequently opposed, not to the real truth, but to some form of error which they mistake for it; or, again, they are held back by certain consequences which they suppose to be involved in it, but which are not. They are held back by an inveterate prejudice, which hinders them from seeing the pure truth, apart from the error with which they have been accustomed to associate it. And it ought to be a subject of humiliation to those who hold the truth, that we cannot present it to their minds in a form in which they would appreciate it, or, again, that through some imperfection of ours, they may be repelled from it, rather than drawn by its own intrinsic attractiveness.

3. What *religious* persons among the so-called "Evangelical" portion of the Church, hold *positively*, that is, their faith, is true. They, then, who have received the fuller teaching of the primitive and undivided Church, have not to call upon them to lay aside any thing which they believe, but to propose a fuller belief to them. And when that fuller truth is, by the Grace of God, received, whatever errors now cleave to them will drop off; as a substance held in solution is parted with and precipitated, when another is poured in to which the substance which holds it has greater affinity.

The writer has felt, these fifteen years, that there was more susceptibility for Catholic truth among *religious* minds, who, in consequence of misapprehension, thought themselves, or were, opposed to it, than among many who held what in words more nearly approached to it. He always anticipated, (in common with others,) that it would be discarded by some who thought that they held it, when they knew what it involved, and would be received by very many who opposed it, when they came to see it truly. Both these expectations were early verified, whatever else there has been against or beyond all his hopes. And so the writer has felt himself called, not so much to oppose those who are entangled in partial views or misconceptions of the truth, as to teach, positively, the truth which they oppose, trusting that "they who are of the truth will hear" its "voice." In the Preface to this volume, he wished to point out how the full belief of the Mystery that faithful Christians are "in Christ," at once comprehends all the truths of our relation to our Redeeming Lord, which are held sacred by those who have embraced a more partial system, embodies those truths in a deeper and more blessed way, and excludes the errors which they imagine to attach to Catholic teaching.

The writer spoke of "good and pious men," because, while the case of each individual among us must be left to the Judge, Who shall "make manifest the counsels of the heart," it is plain, upon the very surface, that a large, perhaps the larger, portion of so-called religious controversy, is hollow, unearnest, irreverent, and irreligious. How should it be otherwise, where, amid many words, there is so little

self-sacrificing zeal for souls, so little devotedness or love? Yet God has His own every where. He is calling more and more to follow Him, Who is "the Way, the Truth, and the Life." As we love Him more Who is the Truth, we shall receive, hold, set forth the Truth, "as it is in Him." As we love Him Who is our Head, with a more burning, self-devoted love, we must, in Him, love His members. And love understands thoughts of love, although ill-expressed, and catches at thoughts of truth, though conveyed in broken words and but half-uttered, and reads the heart with which it sympathises, and can even open to it its own undeveloped meaning, or what it should mean, instead of being itself repelled by its rude or imperfect speech. As we love our Lord more, we shall love more all whom He loves; and as we love more, we shall understand one another better. One grain of love avails more than many pounds of controversy. To those, then, whether penitents or child-like minds, who seek our One Lord earnestly, and to to do His Will, the writer, such as he is, wished to speak words of peace and love, if so be it might help some who love Him, even in this life to love one another more in Him.

"O Good Shepherd of the sheep,
lead us and feed us,
and nothing shall be wanting
in the place of the pasture where Thou hast folded us,
until we be brought
to the pasture of Eternal Life."

PREFACE.

THE following Sermons were written at long intervals, as the intermission of ordinary duties or other circumstances seemed to be an occasion or a call to preach. This has probably caused more or less repetition of thought, which has not been removed in the course of the publication.

The writer, however, rather wishes to remark what sort of repetition he did not wish to avoid, the inculcation of the Great Mystery, expressed in the words to be "*in* Christ," to be "Members of Christ," "Temples of the Holy Ghost;" that Christ doth, through the Holy Ghost Whom He hath given to us, dwell really and truly in the hearts of the faithful. This doctrine he has the more insisted upon, as it is to be feared that it is habitually neglected, even by many who do not in words deny it.

The writer has long felt that a fuller appreciation of this doctrine might be the most hopeful means of re-uniting earnest persons, who now think themselves further apart from one another than they really are. In different ways, the impression was forced upon him, that pious men, who themselves are suspicious of their brethren and have brought heavy accusations against them, as though they "corrupted the Gospel of Christ," were really only anxious as to this, that

nothing should be said or taught, which should in any way interfere with "looking unto Jesus, as the Author and Finisher of our Faith," our Only Hope and Confidence, our Help and Refuge. And whereas they themselves often use unguarded language, both as to the Church and the Sacraments, at which others, in their turn, take offence, he felt persuaded that they only mean this; that nothing is to occupy the place of Christ in the soul. Good and pious men, to whom their Saviour is their All, and who feel at once the need of dying to the world and living to Him, have had difficulties in receiving the full "Truth as it is in Him," through confounding it with a dry and stiff system which existed among us in the last dreary century. That century might eminently be called "Sæculum tepidum." Lukewarmness was its characteristic. In France, the Church was losing its hold over its people, and infidelity secretly or overtly grew, until, in the French Revolution, it burst out in the most fearful form of Anti-Christianism which ever desolated any portion of the Church of Christ; and now, after the struggle of more than half a century, a religious writer of their own has said that in a population of thirty millions, only two millions of France are Catholic. In Protestant Germany, faith gradually died out, until, at last, it shook hands with rationalism, and, as has been described by one of their own writers, "unbelief seemed scarcely to have an antagonist, but ruled over the land in all the stillness of a Churchyard;" and Roman Catholic Germany, although it shewed it less openly, was not exempt from its influence. Denmark, Norway, Sweden, Holland, were infected al-

most as deeply. Switzerland became mostly Socinian. And we ourselves suffered deeply, both in lukewarmness of life and degeneracy of faith, until the horrors of the French Revolution awoke us as out of a deathsleep. We shall never understand our present difficulties nor our trials, nor their remedies, nor each other and our duties, until we come to bewail in common the state into which we were sunken, and from which doubtless we ourselves suffered, and which each, in our measure, alas! contributed to continue. The condition both of life and doctrine in the beginning and middle of the last century, are briefly described by one of whom it is enough here to say that he has spent a long life in the earnest endeavour to promote piety, and the love of the Redeemer.[a]

"What public morals were at the beginning of the last century, is notorious both from the history of that time, and from the indelible records which its writings have transmitted to us. If, then, we enquire into the religion of that same period, we shall learn that the 'Gospel principle of Faith had begun to be held by many for fanatical, and that those who understood its true original, found so much difficulty in adjusting the distinct rights of Grace and morality, that things were come to such a pass, (morality was advanced so high, and Faith so frittered into nonsense), that it became the fashionable tenet of the times, to consider Christianity as a republication of the religion of nature.'"

But, even apart from this, which Warburton designates as "the fashionable tenet of the times," there was a large school, respectable, earnest in its measure, who held the faith, and yet in antagonism to Calvinistic teaching, sadly wanting both in depth and warmth. The language they used was sound

[a] Sumner on Apostolical Preaching, ch. v. p. 218, quoting "Warburton's Discourse on The Holy Spirit." The author subjoined, "Neither the Bishop nor myself must be accused of saying this without limitation. No doubt there are many shining exceptions to the prevailing errors of the age."

when pressed; that is, they really denied none of the truths of the Faith; and yet what appeared on the surface would leave much such impressions as these; that "Baptism was an entrance into an outward Covenant, much as Circumcision to the Jews; that there was no Regeneration except in Baptism, but that Baptismal Regeneration was a change of state only, (not a new principle of life in Christ); that this change having been made, there was no need of any great subsequent change, (in opposition to those who required that all should know the date of their conversion; that is, the one denied that any grew up in Baptismal Grace, the other that conversion was needed in those who had fallen from it or smothered it). The Grace of Christ, although acknowledged to be essential, sounded, in words, as little more than an outward help, coming in aid of man's natural powers; and Everlasting Life was the covenanted reward of man's imperfect obedience, which was accepted for the Merits of Christ. To belong to the Church, was to be the member of a certain visible body, with little mention of its inward life or union with its Head. Calls, or spiritual experiences were almost made over, as belonging to those who practically misapplied the doctrines; and religion seemed to be placed in the understanding, rather than in the affections."

In opposition to such a system, a school among us took up somewhat too nakedly the two doctrines of the corruption of our nature and our natural helplessness, and need of our Redeemer; and what they insisted on positively, their successors have dwelt on negatively, as though to feel the blessedness of being in the Church, that is, in the language of Holy

Scripture, "the Body of Christ," were to forget the Head; or to dwell much on the Sacraments as the channels of His Grace, were to forget "the Fountain of all Goodness," of Whose Grace they are the channels; or to believe that Baptism conveyed a new life to the infants, were to suppose that that life and grace *must* remain in the careless or evil liver; or to hold that the Holy Eucharist is to the faithful receiver the "Body and Blood of Christ," were to imply that It was so in any other way than by virtue of the Word of Christ, or was Life not death to the profane.

Of much of this misunderstanding, the writer could not but believe that the full belief in the doctrine of our being "in Christ," would be the remedy.

The Church is the Body of Christ, as Scripture saith, "the Temple of Christ, the House of Christ, the City of God;" but thereby are we brought nearer to Him "Who is the Head of the Body, the Indweller of the House, the Sanctifier of the Temple, the King of the Heavenly City.[b]"

Since again to be in the Church is to be *in* Christ, a member of Christ, they only are in the Church who are its living members. For branches really withered are not in the Vine, but cast forth; those dead in trespasses and sins, though they may yet be brought back to life, are not now *in* Christ. "In that Ineffable Foreknowledge of God, many who seem to be without are within, and many who seem within are without. Of all those then, who, so to speak, are inwardly and secretly within, consisteth that 'garden inclosed, sealed fountain, well of living water, paradise with

[b] S. Aug. in Ps. cxxxi. § 3. [c] Id. de Bapt. c. Don. v. 38.

fruits.[c]'" "Whether they seem to be within, or are openly without, 'that which is flesh is flesh;' whether they continue on the barn floor in their barrenness, or, by the occasion of temptation, are carried without as by a wind, what is chaff is chaff. And he is ever severed from the unity of that Church which is without spot and wrinkle, who amid fleshly obduracy is even mingled with the congregation of the saints.[d]" "Those who, being such, seem to be within, are not only spiritually without, but even in body shall be separated in the end. For all such are of no account, and yet the Sacrament of Baptism, which is in them, is not therefore nothing. For in those also who are 'cast out,' if they repent and return, the salvation returneth which had departed from them; but the Baptism, as not having departed, doth not return,[e]" (that is, is not renewed.)

Again, the very characteristic of "the two great Sacraments of the Gospel," is the nearness of the Union with Christ. Baptism, indeed, which "adorned the soldier, convicteth the deserter,[f]" and the Holy Eucharist, "giveth life to the good, bringeth death to the bad;[g]" yet to those who receive them and retain their power, they are the channels of the Presence of Christ in the soul. In the fervent language of our homily,[h]

"If thou doubtest of so great wealth and felicity that is wrought for thee, O man, call to thy mind that therefore hast thou received into thine own possession the Everlasting Verity, our Saviour Jesus Christ, to confirm to thy conscience the truth of all this matter. Thou hast received Him, if in true faith and repentance of heart thou hast received Him; if in purpose of amendment thou hast

[d] S. Aug. de Bapt. c. Don. i. 26. [e] Ib. vi. 23. [f] Id. in Ps. xxxix. Præf.
[g] Id. in Joh. Tr. 50. § 10. [h] 2. P. On the Resurrection.

received Him for an everlasting gage, or pledge of thy salvation. Thou hast received His Body Which was once broken, and His Blood Which was shed for the remission of thy sin. *Thou hast received His Body, to have within thee the Father the Son and the Holy Ghost for to dwell with thee*, to endow thee with grace, to strengthen thee against thine enemies, and to comfort thee with Their Presence. Thou hast received His Body to endow thee with everlasting righteousness, to assure thee of everlasting bliss, and life of thy soul."

Yet it is chiefly in the doctrine of "good works" that the full belief that the Christian is "*in* Christ" might remove our misunderstandings. There is a morbid fear, lest any mention of "good works" should introduce something of our own, as though men claimed Salvation in part through their own deserts, in part through the Merits of Christ. And this may be true, at least on the surface of the cold system of theology prevalent in the last century. The very reverse is the case as to the Scriptural Doctrine, to be "in Christ." With this truth imprinted on the soul, "good works" may be the more fearlessly spoken of, because they are *not* our own. To shrink from speaking of the value which God gives them, may rather imply that men think them their own. Boastfulness is of our own, not Another's. Must a beggar needs be proud, who owns that he has received a large alms? St. Paul, when compelled, shrinks not to say, "I laboured more abundantly than they all," adding only, "Yet not I, but the Grace of God Which was with me." Christians may fearlessly confess that "good works" are the dowry, wherewith Christ adorns the soul which He hath purchased with His Blood, and called, and sanctified by His Spirit; it were ungrateful not to own it. For

what is our own, but our short-comings, and weakness of faith, and miseries and sins? What is any good in any one, but the Gift of God in him?

It may be well then here to set down some passages of the great maintainer of the doctrine of Grace, and, by God's Grace, the crusher of Pelagianism, in hopes that in his words we may understand one another, if we cannot in our own. He no where goes about to lower the "good works" which Christians, by the Indwelling of the Spirit of God, do. The Grace of Christ must precede our good will, must create it; the Grace of Christ must sustain our good will; the Grace of Christ must perfect it. Yet it is *in* us, not without us, that He perfects our good will; He builds us up, not as dead stones, without our will, but as "living stones," with a life from Himself, with our will.

1. Whatever is good in us, is through God, indwelling and inworking.

"'By grace[1] ye are saved.' When thou hearest 'by grace,' understand gratis. If then gratis, thou hast brought nothing of thine own, hast merited nothing. For if anything is repaid to merits, it is reward, not Grace. 'By grace,' he saith, 'ye are saved, though faith.' Explain this more plainly, on account of the arrogant, self-complacent, ignorant of the Righteousness of God, and wishing to set up their own (the Pelagians). Hear it again more plainly, 'and this,' he saith, 'that ye are saved by grace,' 'is not of yourselves, but is the gift of God.' But perhaps we too have done something of our own, that we may deserve the gifts of God? 'Not of works,' he saith, 'lest any one should boast.' What then? Do we not good works? Yea, we do them. But how? Himself working in us. For *through faith, we give place in our heart to Him, Who, in us, and by us, worketh good.* For hear whence thou workest good. 'We are His Workmanship,

[1] S. Aug. in Ps. cxliv. § 10.

created *in* Christ Jesus in good works, that we should walk in them.' This is the abundant sweetness of the memory of His Marvellous Works towards us. Pouring out this, His Preachers will exult in His Righteousness, not their own."

2. Yet God so worketh in us, as to require us through His Grace to work.

"If[k] it is God Who worketh in us, why is it said, 'Work out your own salvation?' Because He in such wise worketh in us, that we too should work. 'Be Thou my Helper.' He implieth, that he too worketh who calleth on a Helper. But thou sayest, 'The good will is thine.' Thine, I own. But it too, by whom is it given? by whom awakened? Hear not me; ask the Apostle. 'For it is God,' he saith, 'Who worketh in us, both to will and to do, of His Good Pleasure.' What is it then that thou didst arrogate to thyself? Return to thy heart, find thyself to be evil, and, that thou mayest be good, call on the Good. For nothing in thee pleaseth God, but what thou hast from God; what thou hast from thyself displeaseth God. If thou thinkest of thine own good, 'what hast thou which thou hast not received? But if thou hast received, why boastest thou, as if thou hadst not received?' God Alone giveth only; He Alone hath none who can give to Him, Who hath none better. If thou art inferior to Him, yea, because thou art inferior, rejoice that thou art made in His Image, that in Him thou mayest be found, who in thyself wert lost. For thou couldest not, in thyself, but destroy thyself; nor knowest thou how to find thyself, unless He Who made thee, seek thee."

"Let[l] us then, my brethren, both hold fast this justification, in so far as we hold it, and increase it in so far as we are deficient, and perfect it when we shall have come thither where it shall be said, 'O death, where is thy victory? O death, where is thy sting?' But all of God: yet not as though we should sleep, not as though we should make no effort, not as though we should have no will. Without thine own will the righteousness of God will not be in thee. The will indeed is none save thine own, the righteousness is none, save God's. The righteousness of God can be without thy will, but cannot be *in thee* without thy will. It hath

[k] Id. Serm. 13. in Ps. ii. t. v. p. 81. § 3.

[l] Id. Serm. 169. [Homilies on the N. T. 119. § 13. Oxf. Tr.]

been shewn thee what thou oughtest to do; the Law hath commanded, 'Do not this, nor that; do this and that.' It hath been shewn thee, hath been enjoined thee, it is clear to thee, if thou hast any heart, thou understandest what to do; pray that thou mayest do it, if thou knowest 'the power of Christ's Resurrection. For He was delivered for our sins, and rose again for our justification.' What is, 'for our justification?' That He might justify us, that He might make us righteous. Thou wilt be the work of God, not only in that thou art a man, but also in that thou art righteous. For it is a better thing for thee to be righteous, than to be a man. If God made thee a man, and thou makest thyself righteous, thou makest something better than God made. But God made thee without thyself. For thou didst not give any consent, that God might make thee. How didst thou consent, who wast not? He then Who made thee without thine own self, doth not justify thee without thyself. He made thee then without thy knowledge, He justifieth thee with thy will. Nevertheless it is He That justifieth; lest it should be thine own righteousness, lest thou shouldest return to 'loss,' and 'forfeit,' and 'dung,' not able to find in Him thine 'own righteousness which is of the Law, but the righteousness through the faith of Christ which is of God: the righteousness of faith, to know Him, and the power of His Resurrection, and the fellowship of His Sufferings.' And this will be thy power: the fellowship of Christ's Sufferings will be thy power."

And again;[m]

"'For as many as are actuated by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God.' Not they who live after their own flesh, not they who live after their own spirit, not they who are led by the pleasure of the flesh, not they who are actuated by their own spirit; but 'as many as are actuated by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God.'

"One will say to me, 'Then we are actuated, we do not act.' I answer, Yes truly, thou dost both act, and art actuated; and then thou dost act well, if thou art actuated by the Good. For the Spirit of God Who actuateth thee, is a Helper to thee in thy acting. For the very name of helper teacheth thee, that thou thyself too doest something. Call to mind what it is thou desirest, call to

[m] Id. Serm. 156. [106, § 10, 11. p. 768. Oxf. Tr.]

mind what it is thou acknowledgest, when thou dost say, 'Be Thou my Helper, leave me not.' Thou certainly callest on God as a Helper. No one is helped, if nothing is done by him. 'For as many,' says he, 'as are actuated by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God:' not by the letter, 'but by the Spirit:' not by the Law enjoining, threatening, promising; but 'by the Spirit' exhorting, illuminating, helping. 'We know,' says the same Apostle, 'that all things work together for good to them that love God.' If thou wert not a worker, He would not be a Worker together."

"The[n] True Master did not say, 'Without Me ye can indeed do something, but more easily by Me;' He did not say, 'Without Me ye can bring forth fruit, but more abundantly by Me.' He did not say this. What saith the Lord? 'Without Me ye can do nothing.' Now when you hear, 'As many as are actuated by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God,' do not give yourselves up to carelessness. For God doth not so build up His Temple with you, as if with stones which have no motion of their own; which are lifted up, and set in their place by the builder. Not so are living stones; 'And ye as living stones are builded together into a temple of God.' Be ye led, but do ye run yourselves also; be ye led, but follow; because when ye shall have followed, that will be true, that 'without Him ye can do nothing.' 'For it is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God, Who sheweth mercy.'"

3. Thus the works, although wrought *in* us, are more the works of God than ours.

"Behold[o] in me Thy Work, not mine. For mine, if Thou seest, Thou condemnest; Thine, if Thou seest, Thou crownest. For whatever good works there be of mine, from Thee are they to me. And so they are more Thine than mine. For I hear from Thine Apostle, (Eph. ii. 8.) 'By grace are ye saved through faith, and that not of yourselves; it is the Gift of God: not of works, lest any man should boast; for we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works.'"

"For lo! in Paul,[p] aforetime Saul, He found no good. When in him He had found no good, He forgave what was evil, gave

[n] Id. Serm. 156, § 13. [o] Id. in Ps. cxxxvii. fin. [p] Serm. 333. § 5.

what was good. Since then He first gave what was good, He prevented Him; but by giving Him good, which He should afterward reward with good, lo! He gave a reward to these good works. Him fighting the good fight, finishing his course, keeping the faith, He repaid with good. But for what good? What Himself had given. Did not Himself give, that thou shouldest fight a good fight? If He Himself gave not, how is it that thou sayest in another place, (1 Cor. xv. 10.) 'I laboured more abundantly than they all; yet not I, but the Grace of God which was with me?' Lo! again thou sayest, 'I finished the course;' did not Himself give that thou shouldest finish the course? If Himself gave it not, what is it that thou sayest in another place, (Rom. ix. 16.) 'It is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that sheweth Mercy?' 'I have kept the faith.' Thou hast kept it, I own; but 'Except the Lord keep the city, the watchman waketh but in vain.' By Him then aiding, by Him giving, thou hast both 'fought the good fight,' and 'finished the course,' and 'kept the Faith.' With due reverence, O Apostle, I know nothing of thine own, but what is evil. With due reverence, O Apostle, I say, for thou didst teach me. I hear thee confessing, I find thee not ungrateful. From thee we know that thou hadst prepared nothing for thyself but evil. When then God crowneth thy merits, He crowneth nothing but His Own Gifts."

"We read[q] [in Holy Scripture] that *they* are justified in Christ who believe in Him, through the hidden communication and inspiration of Spiritual Grace, whereby whosoever cleaveth unto the Lord is one spirit."

"In[r] a marvellous yet true way, not the righteousness which is *in* the law or *from* the law, but that which is in the spirit of grace, fulfilleth the righteousness of the law. For the righteousness of the law is fulfilled in them, as it is written, who walk not according to the flesh, but according to the Spirit. For according to the righteousness which is in the law, the Apostle says he was blameless, in the flesh, not in the Spirit; and the righteousness which is from the law he calleth his own, not God's. It must be understood then, that the righteousness of the law is not fulfilled according to the righteousness which is in the law or from the law; that is according to the righteousness of man; but according to the

[q] De pecc. mer. et remiss. i. 10.

[r] Con. 2 Epp. Pelag. iii. 20.

righteousness which is in the Spirit of Grace; and so according to the righteousness of God which is to man from God. More plainly and briefly, the righteousness of the law is not fulfilled when the law commandeth, and man doeth as it were by his own strength, but when the Spirit aideth, and the will of man, free, but freed by the Grace of God, doeth. It is not therefore called the Righteousness of God, because by It God is righteous, but because It is to man from God."

4. And this righteousness may be without works of love, (if there be no time for such), yet cannot be without love shed abroad in the heart.

"How[3] doth 'faith work by love,' and how is 'a man justified by faith, without works of the law?' Observe how. A man hath believed, received the sacraments of faith in his bed, and died; he had no time to work. What say we; that he was not justified? We say he was justified, believing in Him Who justifieth the ungodly. So then he was justified, yet did not work; and the saying of the Apostle is fulfilled, 'We say that a man is justified by faith without the works of the law.' The robber who was crucified with the Lord, 'with the heart believed unto righteousness, and with the mouth made confession unto salvation.' For faith which worketh by love, although there be nothing wherein it outwordly worketh, is kept fervent in the heart within; 'faith worketh by love' in the heart, even although it goeth not forth in act."

In statements such as these, it is hoped that earnest persons may yet be united; at least, that they who hold these truths, will not, on this ground, consider one another as aliens. For how could any state the truth more strongly than St. Augustine, who claims for God Alone the entire work of man's salvation, asserting only that He applies and accomplishes it in man, through man's will, set free, enabled, upheld, in deeds well-pleasing unto Him, through His Grace, of which Grace those works are

[3] Serm. 2 fin.

the fruit? What can any say more, without himself falling into some opposite heresy, than St. Augustine has said? "Good works are God's Gifts;" our good works are rather God's than our's; "God crowneth *in* us His Own Gifts;" "He Who made thee without thee, doth not justify thee without thee;" "God so worketh *in* us, that we too work;" "The Righteousness[t] of God is that which maketh righteous by imparting;" "The Righteousness of God[u] becometh ours, in that it is to us from God." But these all lie in that one great word, "to be *in* Christ;" for since we are taken out of our state of nature, and all which is ours is so by virtue of our being not our own, but Christ's, all are fruits of the life of grace, whereby the soul lives through Him, how should it speak of any thing as its own, when its very spiritual being is not its own?

But, again, negatively, the doctrine of the life of the Christian as being from and in Christ, as it is the safeguard against any shade of Pelagianism, so, in conjunction with the rest of the Catholic Faith, it satisfieth the cravings of the soul for a life united with God, which, if not lawfully satisfied, may readily become a prey to fanaticism, a spurious mysticism, or, ultimately, Pantheism. When the true food of the soul is not supplied, Satan is ever on the watch to introduce a spurious substitute. Most heresy has a side allied to Catholic truth, by virtue of which it seduces souls, not altogether indevout. Wesleyanism substituted its doctrine of "present salvation" for the comfort through the ordinance of confession and

[t] De spir. et lit. c. ii.

[u] De grat. Christi, c. 13. See further on this subject the writer's preface to the fourth edition of the letter to the Bishop of Oxford (published separately).

absolution; the "Plymouth brethren" are aiming to restore Christian simplicity; the very "Socialists" are a spurious anti-Christian imitation of the first love of the Church; Fanatics of all sorts imagine that they are looking for the second Coming of our Lord, which is the centre of Christian longing. In whatever degree the Church fulfils her mission, she will present to every soul of man, in the fulness of Scriptural and Catholic truth, that which it is craving for; in whatever degree she neglects her office, some spurious imitation of it will, through the defect of some grace, seduce even earnest souls.

And this is the more threatening, now that Pantheism is abroad, both in Germany and America, and will probably be the permanent antagonist of the Gospel, as, however at variance with the voice and constitution of human nature, it is the only consistent form of unbelief. It can hardly be said, perhaps, how far the Eutychianism of Luther in his theory as to the Holy Eucharist, may have contributed to it, (for Eutychianism is Pantheistic in its characteristic heresy,) but, at least, Pantheism has its origin in Lutheran Germany. It has found entrance among the Congregationalists and Unitarians of America.

It is then very serious, when the doctrine of "the participation of the Divine Nature" (2 Pet. i. 4.) is represented as Pantheistic;[x] it is directly to prepare

[x] Dr. Hampden first brought the charge against St. Thomas Aquinas, who says less than Holy Scripture itself. For, whereas Holy Scripture says that, "there are given to us exceeding great and precious promises, that by these we might be partakers of the Divine Nature," (2 Pet. i. 4) Aquinas only says, "the gift of Grace exceedeth every faculty of created nature, since it is nothing else than *a certain* (*quædam*) participation of the Divine Nature,

the way for error, to represent the truth as involving it. The Christian doctrine that we are "partakers of the Divine Nature," so far from being consistent with Pantheism, contradicts it, for it implies personal

which exceedeth all other nature; and therefore it is impossible that any creature should cause Grace. For thus it is of necessity that God Alone should deify, (see below, p. 233, not. l.) by communicating a sharing (consortium) of the Divine Nature, by a sort of participation of likeness; as, it is impossible that any thing should kindle fire, save fire alone." (2. 1. q. 112. art. 1). On this Dr. Hampden stated, that "the Pantheistic notion of 'a participation of Deity,' or an actual deification of our nature, is the fundamental idea of the operation of Grace according to the schoolmen." (Bampton Lectures, iv. p. 197.)

Dr. Hampden subsequently brought the same charge against St. Bonaventura, involving an attack on the writer. The passage of St. Bonaventura is "Then truly is the whole man changed into Christ, when detached from himself, and rising above all creatures, he is so wholly transformed into His Suffering Lord as to see nothing and to feel nothing but Christ Crucified, mocked, railed at, and suffering for us.[a]"

Dr. Hampden proceeds, "Such a view of the Atonement, (*Pantheistic as it is*) is nothing strange in a mystic writer of the Church of Rome. The strange thing is, that a minister of the Church of England should adopt such a sentiment as his own, and recommend it to others.[b]"

St. Bonaventura is not Pantheistic, unless St. Paul is, (1 Cor. vi. 17; 2 Cor. iii. 18.) Nor is he speaking of the Atonement at all, but of the union with Christ through His Spirit. But again to refer to the work of Gerson, written in warning against unauthorized mystical language, there is not even the colour of any such shocking imputation to St. Bonaventura. "There are many words of Christ," (says Gerson,) "praying the Father that the faithful may be one (unum), as the Father and the Son are One (Unum). But of old the Holy Fathers with certainty expound these sayings so that the unity is not essential, nor by any precise likeness, but only

[a] "Bonaventura," quoted by Dr. Pusey in his Preface to Surin, p. xxxviii.

[b] "The Work of Christ, and the Work of the Spirit," 2 Sermons, &c. p. 118—19.

existence; Pantheism assumes, that[y] "God is whatever thou seest." Such union alone with God would be Pantheistic, according to which it should be assumed that "the[z] soul ceases to be in that being which it before had after its own kind, and is converted or transformed and absorbed into the Divine Being and Essence," as the Eutychians affirmed of the Human Soul of Our Lord, and Almaric and other fanatics have affirmed of the soul of man. Yet so does the soul of man long for union with God, that, if the truth is withheld from it, it will seek, by way of imagination or of heresy, Him Whom igno-

assimilation and *participation* is there meant, as Luke saith, (Acts iv. 32.) that 'the multitude of believers had one heart and one soul,' and the same is commonly said of two friends; as also a kindled coal and air filled with light, are said to be one with their fire and light. In this way Boetius proves that the good man is God, according to that of Ps. lxxxii. 'I said, ye are gods,' not indeed through the truth and unity of the Divine Essence, and properly speaking, but by way of *participation* and likeness, of imitation and title; and if this author [Ruysbrock] answered that he understood his own words of the *uniting* (unificatione) *of the spirit with God*, I do not contend nor contradict his meaning; but I doubt not that it is other, else he would be saying *nothing special* of the contemplative, beyond all who are the children of God by the Grace of adoption." (l. c. p. 61.)

It is indeed almost too obvious to dwell upon, save that Pantheism is happily as yet little known among us, that no words expressive of the union of the soul with God can be Pantheistic, unless they implied that the soul ceased to be, and became essentially one with God; in Professor Lee's words, "that unity and sameness of Essence with the Deity, which is implied by the Nicene term *Homoousion*" (sad as it is that he should have imputed this to a writer in the same Church. Remarks on the Sermon of Dr. Pusey, p. 68, note).

[y] Deus est, quodcumque vides.

[z] Gerson Ep. de 3 p. lib. J. Ruysbrock, Epp. t. i. p. 60.

rantly (St. Paul tells us) and blindly, human nature "feels after, though He be not far from every one of us, (Acts xvii. 27.) Pantheism has been the food of the most religious minds of Mohammedanism; in the form of Manicheism it long chained the mind of him who became St. Augustine;[a] and a certain fervor, (however lacking in humility,) of Ssufic poetry shews that it has more semblance of love than Rationalism or Socinianism. All unbelief and heresy will probably sooner or later be resolved into it, and it will be the deadliest antagonist of the Church, as the full Catholic teaching is *the* antidote against it.

"It is certain," (says St. Fulgentius,[b]) "that almost all the errors of heretical pravity manifoldly crept upon certain souls, in that the great Mystery of Godliness which was made 'manifest in the flesh, justified in the spirit, appeared to angels, was preached to the Gentiles, believed in the world, received up into glory,' some either believe not as it is, or altogether disbelieve; and that Stone, Which, refused by the builders, was made the Head of the Corner, is to some, possessed by the blindness of a perverse belief, made 'a stone of stumbling, and a rock of offence.'"

As St. Fulgentius attributes all heresy generally to disbelief in the Incarnation, so St. Leo, on full review of all the heresies of five centuries, says,[c]

"Having considered almost all the opinions of those who believe untruly, those too which rush headlong to the denial of the Holy Ghost, we know that well-nigh none went astray, save one who believed not the truth of the Two Natures in Christ, under the confession of One Person."

[a] "What prouder, than for me with a strange madness to maintain myself to be *that by nature which Thou art?* For whereas I was subject to change, (so much being manifest to me, my very desire to become wise being the wish, of worse to become better;) yet chose I rather to imagine Thee subject to change, than myself not to be *That which Thou art.*" S. Aug. Conf. iv. § 26. see further note A. at the end, p. 316. and 323.

[b] Ad Thras. i. 4. quoted by Petav. de Inc. i. 1. 2.

[c] Serm. 8 de Nativ. c. 4.

To this experience as to ancient heresy, may be added the thoughtful words of one of the most reflective minds of our own time.

"The sacred[d] and mysterious doctrine of the Trinity in Unity, has ever been the surest safeguard against Pantheism in the Christian Church. When consubstantiality with the Divine Father of all is so restricted by the dogmatic symbols to the Son, in Whom, as His expressed Image, He is ever manifested externally, and the Spirit, by Whom He is every where vitally and internally present, —it must always be impossible, without conscious impiety and departure from the Baptismal Faith, to think of any soul or personality beside that of the Three Divine Persons, as constituting in any sense part of the Pleroma of the Godhead. Whatever of this impiety has ever been found within the Church's pale, has either arisen from the heated imagination of individual mystics, whom spiritual arrogance may have tempted to soar to regions that Pagan devotees have constantly occupied,—or from some infusion of Gentile philosophy leading particular speculators astray."

"From all modes of error, and from that portentous one in particular, not far from ourselves, with which it has been the business of these pages to contend, our recourse is to the grand *objective truth* once delivered to the Saints—and however obscured by human weakness, never without its testimony, its living exhibition of righteousness and power to mankind. This truth is what the Creeds of the earliest Church compendiously propound to us: the One God, the Father Almighty, the Creator, not the co-existent soul, of Heaven and earth: the Only-Begotten Son Jesus Christ, true God of God, truly Incarnate as Man, Who was born of the Virgin Mary, and spoke, and acted, and suffered all that the Gospels tell: Who truly died on the Cross for our sins, truly rose from the dead for our Justification, and ascended to the Father, and will come again to judge all men according to their works: the One Holy Ghost sent by Him from the Father, the One Holy Catholic Church Which that Spirit organizes and perpetuates, the Communion of Saints of all times with their Head and with each other in the Divinely founded Society which is animated and pervaded by the same Spirit: the Remission of Sins there obtained from Christ,

[d] Dr. Mill on the Pantheistic theory, P. 1. App. p. 149. and § vii. fin. p. 147, 8.

that is, the first plenary remission in Baptism, and all subsequent remissions to the penitent: the Resurrection of the Body from death, not by a figure or double negation, but in deed and truth: and the Life Everlasting, not of the shifting species, but of every individual faithful Member of Christ's Body, in glory and blessedness. This is authoritatively presented to us from the first by the Church, our Mother, as the sum and substance of saving Faith: and the argument of our adversary himself has shewn sufficiently, that it is from this quarter alone of attested universal truth, that the means of effectually resisting him must be derived. The schemes of successive Rationalists, for superseding this Faith, or re-producing its supposed Idea in other doctrinal forms, destroy and refute each other: and yet while no less opposed to the scheme of the Christian Church, the adversary rests the recommendation of his own fabric on what he asserts it to hold in common with this orthodox scheme—*the strength and virtue and consolation of union with God*, which he admits to be in this; and which in all the other systems, except his own, he declares to be wanting. His own is shewn indeed to be as little tenable as any other: but greater testimony than this from an enemy were evidently impossible."

"Would" (in the words of the same writer,[e]) "that the fact that the very esoteric doctrine of Brahmanism and of all pagan theology is now in the course of propagation to cultivated minds from the centre of Christian Europe, might lead those, in every country, to whom the deposit of Faith is the most cherished possession, to recognize their real adversary, and the divinely instituted means for collective resistance! It may lead them, beyond the miserable confusions of a divided Christendom, often causing such views to be met with suspicion and consequent misapprehension, to look only the more earnestly to the system which alone vanquished heathen philosophy in its power,—the only basis of union against infidelity without and within,—the doctrine and discipline of Christ's Holy Catholic Church."

These results are, however, incidental to the preaching of the truth. As a minister of Christ, the direct object of the writer was to win souls to Him, or to lead closer into "the narrow way" those whom

[e] Id. Preface fin. p. 12.

He had drawn to Himself. And to this end, surely the doctrine that the Christian is the "temple of the Holy Ghost," is "*in* Christ," has an especial power of its own. St. Paul uses it as a special and distinct ground against degrading sin. "Know[f] ye not that your bodies are Members of Christ; shall I then take the Members of Christ, and make them the members of an harlot?" "What know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost Which is *in you*, Which ye have of God, and ye are not your own?" He brings the body too into a special relation to God. "The body[g] is for the Lord, and the Lord for the body;" that is, the body is for Christ its Head, and Christ is as a Head for it, to watch over and to hallow it.

"Mark," (says St. Chrysostom,[h]) "how he has brought the whole to completion in Christ, how he hath raised us up into heaven. 'Ye are members of Christ,' saith he, 'ye are the temple of the Spirit.' For it is not your body which is insulted, since it is not your body at all, but Christ's. . . . . For if the body be another's, 'you have no authority,' says he, 'to insult another's body; and especially when it is the Lord's; nor yet to pollute the temple of the Spirit.' . . . . Considering these things, therefore, reverence thou Him That dwelleth within. For the Paraclete is He. Thrill before Him that is enfolded and cleaves unto thee; for Christ is He. Hast thou indeed made thyself members of Christ? Think thus, and continue chaste: whose members they were, and Whose they have become. Erewhile they were members of an harlot, and Christ hath made them members of His Own Body. Thou hast therefore henceforth no authority over them. Serve Him That hath set thee free."

St. Paul contrasts this very union out of God, with the Union with God. "He that is joined unto the Lord is one Spirit." In one place[i] he even speaks of

[f] 1 Cor. vi. 15—20.
[g] Ib. 13.
[h] Ad loc. p. 237, 9. Oxf. Tr.
[i] Rom. xii. 1.

our bodies as a special sacrifice to God. "I beseech you by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God."

"And how," (says St. Chrysostom[k] again) "is the body, it may be said, to become a sacrifice? Let the eye look upon no evil thing, and it hath become a sacrifice; let thy tongue speak nothing filthy, and it hath become an offering; let thine hand do no lawless deed, and it hath become a whole burnt offering. Or rather this is not enough, but we must have good works also: let the hand do alms, the mouth bless them that cross one, and the hearing find leisure evermore for lections of Scripture. For sacrifice allows of no unclean thing; sacrifice is a first fruit of the other actions. Let us then from our hands, and feet, and mouth, and all other members, yield a first fruit unto God."

There is much need of such teaching. A refined age has subtle sins, the more destructive because subtle. It may be said to all parents: ye may safely, ye cannot too early, or too earnestly, press upon your children that they are the temples of the Holy Ghost, and "therefore reverence thou Him That dwelleth within." "What you would not do if I were by, that do not when alone; for you are in the Presence of God, and He is as much within you as your own soul." "I recollected," said a little child who had been so taught, "that I was the temple of the Holy Ghost, and left off, ashamed, what I was speaking."

It cannot be too solemnly impressed on children, "Reverence the Presence of God within you." The teaching extends to all sin, since all sin of thought is committed in the soul where God especially dwells, all lies or words of sin are spoken or listened to, all deeds of anger, violence, or any other sin, are done by members of that body which Christ has made the temple of the Holy Ghost. How, among

[k] Ad loc. more at length p. 360—2. Oxf. Tr.

us elders, would backbitings, or unloving, or vain, or proud words cease, if we recollected that our tongues are members of the body wherein Christ dwells! How should we cease from longing for outward distinction, from petty pride or jealousies, did we recollect what is the Christian's glory and unspeakable exaltation, that "Christ dwelleth in us and we in Him!"

To end in the words of one to whom the writer, with the whole English Church, is more indebted than he can say;

"It seems a trifle to all but earnest believers, to give way to bad thoughts, to take sinful liberties with the eye or hand: but what says the Scripture? Your eyes and your hands are members of Christ; shall I then take Christ's Eye and Hand, (O horrible!) and make an unclean use of it? Indeed we shall never understand how grievous are our sins against purity, until we have learned to believe indeed that we are members of Christ ourselves, nor against charity, until we believe that our brethern are so.[1]"

[1] Rev. J. Keble. Sermon preached at St. Saviour's, Leeds, "The Last Judgment." p. 86.

CHRIST CHURCH,
Lent, 1848.

CONTENTS.

SERMON I.

THE END OF ALL THINGS.

ADVENT.

REVELATIONS XXI. 6.

Page.

"*And He said unto me, It is done. I am Alpha and Omega, the Beginning and the End.*" . . . 1

SERMON II.

THE MERCIFUL SHALL OBTAIN MERCY.

ADVENT.

ST. MATTHEW XXV. 31.—46.

"*When the Son of Man shall come in His Glory, and all the holy Angels with Him, then shall He sit upon the Throne of His Glory: And before Him shall be gathered all nations: and He shall separate them one from another, as a shepherd divideth his sheep from the goats: And He shall set the sheep on His Right Hand, but the goats on the Left. Then shall the King say unto them on His Right Hand, Come, ye blessed of My Father, inherit the Kingdom prepared for you from the*

Page.

foundation of the world: For I was an hungred, and ye gave Me meat: I was thirsty, and ye gave Me drink: I was a stranger, and ye took Me in: Naked, and ye clothed Me: I was sick, and ye visited Me: I was in prison, and ye came unto Me. Then shall the righteous answer Him, saying, Lord, when saw we Thee an hungred, and fed Thee? or thirsty, and gave Thee drink? When saw we Thee a stranger, and took Thee in? or naked, and clothed Thee? Or when saw we Thee sick, or in prison, and came unto Thee? And the King shall answer and say unto them, Verily I say unto you, Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these My brethren, ye have done it unto Me. Then shall He say also unto them on the Left Hand, Depart from Me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels: For I was an hungred, and ye gave Me no meat: I was thirsty, and ye gave Me no drink: I was a stranger, and ye took Me not in: naked, and ye clothed Me not: sick, and in prison, and ye visited Me not. Then shall they also answer Him, saying, Lord, when saw we Thee an hungred, or athirst, or a stranger, or naked, or sick, or in prison, and did not minister unto Thee? Then shall He answer them, saying, Verily I say unto you, Inasmuch as ye did it not to one of the least of these, ye did it not to Me. And these shall go away into everlasting punishment: but the righteous into life eternal." 16

SERMON III.

PREPARE FOR SEASONS OF GRACE.

CHRISTMAS EVE.

JOSHUA III. 5.

"And Joshua said unto the people, Sanctify yourselves: for to-morrow the LORD *will do wonders among you."* . 35

Page.

SERMON IV.

GOD WITH US.

CHRISTMAS.

St. Matthew i. 23.

"*Behold, a Virgin shall be with child, and shall bring forth a son, and they shall call His Name Emmanuel, which, being interpreted, is God with us.*" . . 47

SERMON V.

THE INCARNATION, A LESSON OF HUMILITY.

CHRISTMAS.

Philippians. ii. 5.—7.

"*Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus, Who, being in the Form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God, but made Himself of no reputation, and took upon Him the form of a servant.*" . 61

SERMON VI.

CHARACTER OF CHRISTIAN REBUKES.

FEAST OF ST. STEPHEN.

Acts vi, 15.

"*And all that sat in the council, looking stedfastly on him, saw his face as it had been the face of an angel.*" 75

SERMON VII.

JOY OUT OF SUFFERING.

FEAST OF THE CIRCUMCISION.

Job xiii. 15.

"*Though He slay me, yet will I trust in Him.*" . . 91

Page.

SERMON VIII.

GOD CALLETH THEE.

SEPTUAGESIMA.

St. Matthew xx. 6, 7.

"*And about the eleventh hour, He went out and found others standing idle, and saith unto them, Why stand ye here all the day idle? They say unto Him, Because no man hath hired us. He saith unto them, Go ye also into the vineyard, and whatsoever is right, that shall ye receive.*" 106

SERMON IX.

THE FEWNESS OF THE SAVED.

SEPTUAGESIMA.

St. Matthew xx. 16.

"*Many be called, but few chosen.*" 121

SERMON X.

FASTING.

SEPTUAGESIMA.

1 Corinthians ix. 27.

"*I keep under my body and bring it into subjection, lest that by any means, when I have preached to others, I myself should be a castaway.*" 139

SERMON XI.

REVIEW OF LIFE.

LENT.

Psalm cxix. 59, 60.

"*I thought on my ways and turned my feet unto Thy*

Page.

testimonies; I made haste and delayed not to keep Thy commandments." 156

SERMON XII.

IRREVERSIBLE CHASTISEMENTS.

LENT.

PROVERBS I. 24.—28.

" *Because I have called, and ye refused; I have stretched out My Hand, and no man regarded; But ye have set at nought all My counsel, and would none of My reproof: I also will laugh at your calamity; I will mock when your fear cometh; When your fear cometh as desolation, and your destruction cometh as a whirlwind; when distress and anguish cometh upon you. Then shall they call upon Me, but I will not answer; they shall seek Me early, but they shall not find Me.*" 171

SERMON XIII.

GOD'S PRESENCE IN LONELINESS.

LENT.

HOSEA II. 14.

" *Therefore, behold, I will allure her, and bring her into the wilderness, and speak comfortably unto her.*" . 188

SERMON XIV.

BARABBAS OR JESUS.

PALM SUNDAY.

ST. MATTHEW XXVII. 21.

" *The governor answered and said unto them, Whether of the twain will ye that I release unto you? They said, Barabbas.*" 202

Page.

SERMON XV.

CHRIST RISEN OUR JUSTIFICATION.

EASTER DAY.

ROMANS IV. 25.

"*Who was delivered for our offences, and was raised again for our Justification.*" 214

SERMON XVI.

THE CHRISTIAN'S LIFE IN CHRIST.

EASTER DAY.

1 CORINTHIANS XV. 22.

"*For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive.*" 230

SERMON XVII.

OUR RISEN LORD'S LOVE FOR PENITENTS.

EASTER.

ST. MARK XVI. 9.

"*Now when Jesus was risen early the first day of the week, He appeared first to Mary Magdalene, out of whom He had cast seven devils.*" 255

SERMON XVIII.

HOW TO DETAIN JESUS IN THE SOUL.

EASTER.

ST. LUKE XXIV. 28, 29.

"*And He made as though He would have gone further. But they constrained Him, saying, Abide with us; for it is toward evening, and the day is far spent. And He went in to tarry with them.*" 268

Page.

SERMON XIX.

THE CHRISTIAN'S LIFE HID IN CHRIST.

EASTER.

COLOSSIANS III. 2.

"*For ye are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God.*" 289

SERMON XX.

INCREASED COMMUNIONS.

EASTER.

I CORINTHIANS XI. 28.

"*Let a man examine himself, and so let him eat of that Bread, and drink of that Cup.*" 307

SERMON XXI.

HEAVEN THE CHRISTIAN'S HOME.

ASCENSION-DAY.

PHILIPPIANS III. 20.

"*Our conversation is in Heaven; from whence also we look for the Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ.*" . . 329

SERMON XXII.

THE CHRISTIAN THE TEMPLE OF GOD.

WHIT-SUNDAY.

JOHN XIV. 15.—17.

"*If ye love Me, keep My Commandments; and I will pray the Father, and He shall give you Another Comforter, that He may abide with you for ever; even the Spirit of Truth, Whom the world cannot receive, be-*

ST. ALBERT'S COLLEGE LIBRARY

Page.

cause it seeth Him not, neither knoweth Him; but ye know Him, for He dwelleth with you, and shall be in you." 342

SERMON XXIII.

THE WILL OF GOD THE CURE OF SELF-WILL.

FEAST OF THE CIRCUMCISION.

ST. MATTHEW XXVI. 39.

" *Not as I will, but as Thou.*" 357

SERMON I.

THE END OF ALL THINGS.

ADVENT.

REVELATIONS XXI. 6.

"*And He said unto me, It is done. I am Alpha and Omega, the Beginning and the End.*"

IN one word did our Blessed Lord upon the Cross sum up the whole of man's salvation and His own Eternal purpose for our Redemption, "It is finished.[a]" In one word (for each is one word[d] in the language wherein He spake them) doth He here, revealing Himself as He sitteth upon His Throne[c] in glory, sum up the whole of time, "It is done." In one human word did our Lord gather into one all which He had willed, and wrought, and suffered, for man's salvation. "Finished" was the determinate Counsel of God; "finished" all that prophecy had foretold and type foreshadowed, and Patriarchs and righteous men had longed to see, and Angels desired to look into; "finished" the work which His Father gave Him to do, and the deliverance He had wrought in the midst of the earth; "finished" were all the sufferings which the malice of man or of Satan could inflict, and the Cup of His Father's wrath; "finished"

[a] S. John xix. 30.

[b] Τετέλεσται, γέγονε.

[c] V. 6. "And He that sat upon the Throne said, &c.

"the transgression" and "an end made to sin;[d]" "finished" the One Sacrifice for sin, the Mortal Life of God made Man, the victory over Satan, his rule and our enthralment.

And now once more, at the close of the world and of time, He that sitteth upon the Throne proclaimeth "It is done." This one great word, in a manner, stands over against, and carries on and enlarges the other. At the Cross all was "finished" in and by Him, our Head. His Holy Mortal Life was over: He was "perfect through sufferings.[e]" He died as Man; He entered upon Death and Hell as their Conqueror, to lead captivity captive. But what was perfected in the Head remained yet to be fulfilled in the Body. In that He vouchsafes to call Himself our Head, He vouchsafes, in a manner, not to account Himself, as Man, perfect without the Body. And what is His Body? Ourselves, brethren, and such as we, imperfect though we be, if we be in Him, if we be longing to be perfected. All was then "finished" in hope, in the earnest, in the First-fruits. In that He vouchsafes to make us His members, when *He* died, *we* died with Him; when *He* arose, *we* arose in Him: when *He* sat at the Right Hand of God to make intercession for us, He made *us* to sit in heavenly places in Himself. We sit in Heaven in Him, as He upon earth still suffers, in His faithful ones, as He saith, "Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou Me?[f]" Yet was this as yet in hope only. Martyrs had yet to win their crown, resisting unto blood; all had "to fight the good fight, striving against sin." All the faithful who were before us, all who now are, and all who shall be to the end, all belong to the one Body of Christ; all, from Abel[g] to the end, who have or shall believe in Him Who bruised for us the serpent's head, belong to that one City of God, that one Body, whereof He is the Head; all, with the countless, blessed, Heavenly Host, belong to that One Heavenly Jerusalem, which in everlasting peace and bliss, shall endlessly praise Whom they shall endlessly love. Many, then, yet unborn,

[d] Dan. ix. 24.
[e] Heb. ii. 10.
[f] Acts ix. 4.
[g] S. Aug. in Ps. 62. § 2.

many now imperfect, many, we trust, who are out of that Body, many, now feebly struggling, or hanging yet in a fearful balance between good and ill, between Satan and God; many now led captive or just recovered and who have yet to weep their falls, and through the Blood of Christ wash out their sins with tears of penitence, yea, some even now dead and buried in trespasses and sins, shall hear the Voice of Christ and live, and shall be owned by Him in the Great Day as His own, yea, twice His own, because when they had wasted in themselves the Price of His Blood, He anew, through that Blood, restored them.

All are saved as yet in hope only. And so, to cheer and animate us in our strife, our Good Lord in this great word "It is done," places us again on the borders of our Heavenly rest, thence to look back on the strifes, and toils, and cares, and temptations, and joys, and sorrows of this fleeting life, as things past and "done." "It is done." All, that is, which ever shall be "done." Things *take place* in time only. In Eternity things do not *take place*, are not "*done*," but *are*. To be done implies change. What we do, before we did it, was not; what just now was to be, has been. When ye came into this Church, ye had yet to pray, to sing Psalms, to hear God's Word: then it was yet to be; now "it is done." Many of you will yet, by God's mercy, receive the Bread of Life: bye and bye this too will be "done" in act, although, by His Mercy, to abide with you in effect. In Eternity will be neither beginning nor end of praise; there they who attain will not weary of praising Whom they will not be wearied of loving: *there*, will be no feeding on Him from time to time, but one unceasing inflowing of Himself in all the Blessed, one unceasing flowing back of praise and love. In Eternity there is no "has been" or "shall be," but the One Unchangeableness of God: I AM. GOD IS, and the glory of the Saints and their bliss, in Eternity, IS in Him, unchangeable as HIMSELF Who is their Glory and their Bliss. And in Hell, the damned shall be fixed too in everlasting, unchangeable, hate of God. This strange mystery of "time," as "the

Angel sware by Him Who liveth for ever and ever," "shall be no longer.[h]" This strange mystery of change in the works of the Unchanging God, shall have no end; and all shall return to that everlasting rest, in which God dwelt when time and creation as yet were not, but only the Co-Equal Trinity in His Eternity.

All shall then be "done" which God in His Eternal Foreknowledge hath ordered and controlled; all His Counsel to the whole race of man, the good and the bad, Angels and devils; all our separate acts; all God's Grace and our labours: God's Long-suffering and our rebellions or our penitence; all our virtues, gained through His Grace; all our trials; our perfecting and the chastisements wherewith we shall be perfected; even Fruits of the Spirit, as "Gentleness, Long-suffering, Goodness, Meekness, Temperance,[i]" all excellence which belongs to this life of trial, shall be "done;" yea, Faith and Hope themselves shall be swallowed up in the Sight and Everlasting Embrace of Him in Whom here, not seeing, we believe, in Whom we trust, Whom we would love. Love alone shall abide, because It is God Himself. Yet even love itself shall not show itself *there* in works of love[k] and mercy; for mercy is only where there is misery, and all there shall be unchanging bliss. Thither "the works of those who die in the Lord do follow them;[l]" they are not there wrought. *There* are no hungry to feed, no naked to clothe, no houseless to take in; no sick to visit; no thirst to quench: no strife to make peace; for all shall be fed and clad and healed and satisfied for ever, by Him, and in Him, to Whom, in His members here, we minister, our everlasting Home and Peace, CHRIST our GOD. In Him Who is the Beginning and the End, Alpha and Omega, beginning and end shall then meet in one, in Him our First Beginning and our Everlasting End.

"It is done." What a word is that, my brethren! As it sounds, what a world of busy restlessness it seems to cut off at once. Well may it! For it is the end of the whole world

[h] Rev. x. 6.
[i] Gal. v. 22.
[k] See S. Aug. Serm. 104. § 3. [54. p. 419, Oxf. Tr.]
[l] Rev. xiv. 13.

itself, of all but God. How it seems to cut us short: what a sudden shock it would give us mostly, were we to hear it at once, when He Who created time, shall bid it cease to be. Here we are ever *doing*; well, if it be well-doing! Here, we are mostly ever planning, toiling, looking forward to things in time, things which may be or may not be, hoping, fearing, living more in that which shall be, than in that which is; restless, never at one stay; if we have not, aiming to have; if we have, aiming to have more, or what we have not; every thing is but a step to that which lies beyond: in nothing, are we beings of the day; in joy, we long for other joys; in grief, we grieve yet more in dread of the morrow than of to day! What a lesson we are to ourselves, if we would read ourselves and our own instincts aright, that there is but one future to look to, that which shall have no future; One End to aim at, even Him Who hath no end; One Joy, One Love, One Peace and Rest, where joy shall not, in the tumultuous way of joys of this earth, displace joy, because it shall be in Him, the Self-same, the Unchanging; yea we ourselves, if we attain, shall be in Him, changed into His Own Image, and in a manner into Himself through His Indwelling, embosomed and resting in that full, deep, tranquil, Ocean of His Love, and His Joy.

But now! to think of all as "done!" How it would bring most of us to a startled stand-still, as when men are stopped at once in the midst of an eager impetuous course, and their whole selves seem shaken by the sudden check. We are, mostly, ever looking forward, and this Voice turns us round at once, and bids us look back. We are, too often, living in an earthly future; *then*, all of earth will be past and "done." Now men are looking on; and hope is as that glass which enlarges things distant; look back, and all shrivels and contracts into a speck, and can no longer fill either eye or heart. How large and long seemed this one year to many, when they entered it; how full, to many, of hopes, and cares, and schemes, and pleasures! What a mere point it has become now! Nothing of it remains, but the

traces it has left upon our souls, good or bad. Any of us may deceive ourselves anew, if they will, as to the next, and the next, and the next. They cannot, if they will look steadfastly at it, deceive themselves as to the past. They may, if they will, fill the future and their minds with unreal things, with hopes which shall never be; they may "chase the wind," "to reap the whirlwind;[m]" in this life's desert, the fiery wastes in the distance may seem like water;[n] when reached, they are but sand. No revel but seems miserable in the morning-light; no sin, but is sickening, when fulfilled. "The wine giveth its colour in the cup, moveth itself aright; *at the last* it biteth like a serpent, and stingeth like an adder.[o]" The past preacheth stern truth, if we will but hear. It is real. It has come to an end; and so in it, we may see things as they shall be in the end. Scarcely the most abandoned sinner can endure the past. Cain, Saul, Ahab, Judas hated it. When the miserable pleasure or gain is over, scarce any but must hate the memory of past guilt. And so, man would ever escape from it, stifle his bitter memories of the past, forget himself and anew look onward, ever begin his course of worldliness or sin anew, and hide from his eyes its end. And God would ever turn him back upon himself, and in the end of each portion of his life, make him read the end of all things and his own.

And we ourselves are witnesses to ourselves in earthly things. In them ye doubt not that the end is the touchstone of their value. Ye prize not what looks fair to the eye, but what endures; not what gives good promise, but what fulfils it; not schemes on paper, but realities; not the rich purple glow of morning, but the day's calm abiding brightness; not the beginning, but the end. "Call no man happy before his death," said once a wise heathen.[p] We judge of things as they tend towards their end; contain, in

[m] Hos. viii. 7.

[n] The "Sharab" (Is. 49, 10), or "mirage," which often deceives even way-farers who know the country. The thirst it excites is the more intense and more bitterly felt.

[o] Prov. xxiii. 32.

[p] Solon.

a manner, their end in themselves, secure it. Well-laid schemes ye call those, which in every step look to, advance towards, their end. Worldly wisdom is that which gains its end. And shall not Divine wisdom be that which gains its own unending End, the End of all ends, the Everlasting God?

And so, our Blessed Lord, lest His Blood should have been shed for us in vain, carries us beyond this world, beyond all time, and places us at "the end." Stand we there with Him for a while aloft, and as it were, out of this world, and look back with Him upon the world, as we shall see it then. What see we there? He Himself has told us. "The heavens passing away with a great noise, and the elements melting with fervent heat, the earth also and the works therein burnt up.[q]" Where *then* will be empires and kingdoms? Where the greatness and the riches of this world, of such as are "not rich towards God?[r]" Alas! burnt up. Where then "the great city," the Babylon of the world, "that was clothed in fine linen and purple and scarlet and decked with gold and precious stones and pearls, who said in her heart, I sit a queen and shall see no sorrow?" "Utterly burnt with fire, for strong is the Lord God Who judgeth her.[s]" Where is "the pride of the world," which saith "I will be like the Most High?" "Brought down to Hell, to the depths of the pit.[t]" Where then, "every high tower and every fenced wall, and ships of Tarshish, and images of desire," all which fills the heart of man? "The Day of the Lord of Hosts is upon them.[u]" Where is the vanity and "the bravery of ornaments?" In that day, saith God, "there shall be burning instead of beauty.[x]" Where the "gold and silver kept back by fraud" and hardness of heart? God saith "It shall eat your flesh as it were fire.[y]" Where "all the houses of joy in the joyous city?" "All joy," answers the word of God, "is darkened, the mirth of the land is gone.[z]" Where the works of the mighty?

q 2 S. Pet. iii. 10.
r S. Luke xii. 21.
s Rev. xvii. 4; xviii. 7, 8.
t Is. xiv. 14, 15.
u Is. ii. 12, 15, 16.
x Ib. iii. 24.
y S. James v. 3, 4.
z Is. xxxiii. 13; xxiv. 11.

God saith, "The mighty shall be as tow and his work as a spark, and they shall both burn together and none shall quench them.[a]" Where "the lusts of the flesh?" "Her scum," saith God, "shall be in the fire.[b]" Where all works which are not according to God? "The fire," saith God, "shall try every man's work, of what sort it is.[c]" What then shall abide in this universal burning? Since "the earth and the works thereof shall be burned up,[d]" that only shall abide, which is not of earth, the Wisdom which is from above, "gold tried in the fire[e]" and bought of Christ, the gold of charity, and the silver of wisdom, and the precious stones of rich, varied, beauteous graces, gleaming with the Light of God's Holy Spirit, "built upon the Foundation, Which is Jesus Christ.[f]"

And now amid this universal burning, and in this awful lurid light of a world in flames, crackling, sinking, melting amid the deluge of the everlasting fire of God, bursting out from its very centre, look well, if thou canst see any trace of those things which now tempt thine eyes, thy heart, thy pride, thy flesh. Then, when kingdoms are burnt up, and the whole earth passeth away like a scroll, see, if thou canst, mark well, thy own petty objects of desire, for which thou art now ready to sell thy soul; thy petty gains, for which thou wilt part with the golden streets of heaven; the limbs of flesh, for which Thou wilt exchange the Embrace of God; thy poor pride, for which thou barterest everlasting glory; titles of earth, for which thou tramplest under foot the crowns of heaven; the praise of man, for which thou prodigally castest away the praise of God; houses and lands, for which thou givest up the heritage purchased by Thy Saviour's Blood, "the Kingdom prepared for thee from the foundation of the world;[g]" luxuries and pomps, the things of thy birth and station, selfish enjoyments of thy poor body, for which thou refusest to feed, and clothe, and warm, the poor of Christ. See if thou canst find them, keep them, treasure them, pluck them out of the fire of the Great

[a] Ib. i. 31. [b] Eph. ii. 3; Ez. xxiv. 12. [c] 1 Cor. iii. 13.
[d] 2 S. Pet. iii. 10. [e] Rev. iii. 18. [f] 1 Cor. iii. 11. [g] S. Matt. xxv. 34.

Day; if so, by all means hoard them, keep them, now. If these are the diadems of heaven, thy Saviour's lot on earth, the tokens He will own, the badges of His discipleship, the treasure with which thou shalt be "received into everlasting habitations,[h]" gather them around thee; redouble thy pains; let no joy pass by thee. If not a wreck will escape then, behold, in that their end, their value now.

Yea, "would," men shall say, "there were no traces of them then!" Yet too surely shall they be found, not without thee, but within thee, in the book of thy conscience, the book out of which thou shalt be judged; bound up with thee, and part of thee and binding thee; thou shalt find them not as thy possessions, but as things to possess thee; the things themselves passed away; the stain of conscience, the gnawing worm, the corroding sin, all, unless washed away by the tears of penitence and thy Saviour's Blood, too surely shalt thou find. What thou hast sought now, thou wouldest, if thou couldest, flee then; "they hatch," saith Holy Scripture, "cockatrice eggs, and, crushed, it breaketh forth into a viper.[i]" "Ye have heaped treasure together for the last days;[k]" but alas, therein, thou "treasurest up unto thyself wrath against the Day of wrath and revelation of the righteous Judgment of God.[l]" What thou lovest now, thou wouldest hate then, and thyself for having loved them.

And now, Brethren, having thus looked back on this world, as it shall then seem at the end amid the fires of the Judgment Day, take up your stand again where ye are now, amid the temptations, cares, deceits, follies of the day, and thence again look forward, if ye can and will. Look forward anew to the vanities of the world, its schemes and pleasures, its strifes, and wealth, and power, and honours; the praise of men, the gaining of all the wishes of your hearts out of God; set before you, if ye will, hold in your grasp, all that your minds, in their wildest dreams, ever fancied, or pictured to themselves, of good out of God.

[h] S. Luke xvi. 9. [i] Is. lix. 5. [k] S. Jam. v. 3. [l] Rom. ii. 5.

Only take heed, that ye look far enough. Look on, if ye will. Add pleasure to pleasure, gain to gain, honour to honour, vanity to vanity, self-indulgence to self-indulgence; stretch out your sight, month after month, year after year. Be it that each step, instead of weariness and loathing, should but satisfy your hearts the more! We will look on with you, if ye will look on with us. We will look on with you, step by step, through all the years of time, grant all ye claim, if ye will but look on with us, beyond all time, to eternity. Imagine to yourselves, what ye will do or enjoy, or sin, next, and next, and next; so ye still ask on, "But what next?" "And what afterwards?" "What afterwards?" belongs to time; ask on beyond all time; what is that "afterwards" which has no "afterwards," the afterwards of an everlasting unchanging doom? Do what ye will, so that those words "What afterwards?" ring in your ears, and ye with truth will answer them. When thou art tempted to sin, pause but this one moment, ask thyself steadfastly, "And what afterwards?" await the answer (sin has but one "afterwards," deep penitence or Hell), and through God's mercy on thy soul, thou wilt sin no longer. Those words "What afterwards?" have by God's mercy converted souls to Him; for surely no things of time can satisfy a soul made to outlive all time, no things of sense can suffice an undying spirit; nothing passing can be the end of the soul which abideth; nothing created can fill the soul made for its Creator.

This then can be the only measure of the value of things in time, what shall be their value when time itself is gone. Even a heathen, was taught of God to say, "The whole life of the wise is a thinking on death.[m]" That only is wise to be done, which in death ye shall wish ye had done. "Whatsoever thou takest in hand," saith the son of Sirach, "remember the end, and thou shalt never do amiss.[n]" "Oh that they were wise," saith God Himself, "that they understood this, that they would consider their latter end.[o]"

[m] Plato, in Phædone. [n] Ecclus. vii. 36. [o] Deut. xxxii. 29.

"Whether I eat, or whether I drink," says an ancient father,[p] "whether I study or whatsoever else I do, that last trumpet ever soundeth in my ears, 'Arise, ye dead, come to judgment.'" "In every work," it is an ancient rule,[q] "let each say to himself, Wert thou about to die, wouldest thou do this?" Not only open sinners then, Brethren, but we all, whom God has placed or brought back into the narrow way, have need ever to try again and again, what we are *doing*, by that searching test, how shall we look upon it, when all "is done?" We are not yet in our home: not as yet do we reign; things around us still dazzle us; self-pleased thoughts may yet mislead us: we have still, while yet we are in the flesh, to strike closer and closer into the narrow way, closer and closer to cleave to God, more and more to part with all which would keep us from God. And so God often brings things around us to a sudden end, or brings us, in our own sight, near the end, that so we may see things more as we shall see them in the end. Seasons of sorrow or sickness, or approaching death, have shown persons a whole life in different colours from what it wore before; how what before seemed "grace" was but "nature;" how seeming zeal for God was but natural activity,[r] how love of human praise had robbed men of the praise of God; how what they thought pleasing to God, was only pleasing self; how one subtle self-pleasing sin, has cankered a whole life of seeming grace. Wherever, then, we may be, in the course Heaven-wards, morning by morning let us place before ourselves that Morning which has no evening; and purpose we to do that and that only, which we shall wish we had done, when we shall see it in the light of that Morning when in the Brightness of His Presence, every plea of self-love, which now clouds our eyes, shall melt away. Evening by evening, set we before us that night "wherein no man can work,[s]" and resolve we, by God's grace, to work on the morrow, if we see it, more steadfastly the works of God. "Place daily," said an holy

[p] S Jerome. [q] Arnulfi Spec. Monach. in S. Bern. Opp. T. 2, p. § 16.
[r] Cecil. [s] S. John ix. 4.

Bishop[t] of our own, "place daily before your eyes your end. Think most intently, whose those things shall be, what they shall profit you, which shall remain after you. Think whither ye shall go; what ye shall carry with you; what, sent before by you, ye shall find there. Of a truth, ye shall not carry thither, nor find there, aught but your own deeds, good or bad.—This think ye; these things meditate, by night and by day, in public or in private; this be your converse together, What do we? Why linger we? Near is our last day. How spend we our life? How make we amends to God for our sins? Prepare we, as seeing, close to us, the day of our calling hence, and so fashion ourselves that we may, without fear, go to judgment, since there we shall receive what we have done in the body, good or bad."

Shrink we not, although as we bring our works near to the light of that Day, much seeming good be shewn to us to be real evil, or full of imperfection. Shrink we not, although our seeming treasure melt away, and wherein we thought ourselves rich, we find ourselves poor; shrink we not, although the fire of that Day, while it burns away our dross, scorch us; draw we not back, although by that light, we see that we must part with this self-indulgence, or sloth, or quickness of temper, or that cherished way of acting, which has wound close round us, self-esteem, or love of the praise of man, or even longing for human sympathy. Rather, offer we ourselves, in union with the All-Atoning Sacrifice, to love nothing, to prize nothing, to wish for nothing, to fear nothing, to hold nothing, to regret nothing but what we shall love, prize, wish for, or be glad we had feared, held, regretted, when our Saviour's and Judge's Voice shall utter those dread words "It is done." So, baring ourselves more and more of all unpleasing unto Him, shall we with less sluggish steps, follow Him, Who emptied Himself of all which was His, that He might give us All.

Nor, having chosen or wishing to choose the better part, think we that it will be long and wearisome to do without

[t] S. Anselm, Ep. iii. 63. ad Burgundium et Richer. conjugem ej.

this or that; let not Satan turn or hold us back by telling us we can never hold on so long without this or that; think we it not a weary, dreary future, to wait so long for the Coming of the Lord. Advent by Advent, His Coming draweth nigh; Advent by Advent, with each decaying year, the tokens thicken of the world's decay, the closing strife, the Coming of our God.

Year by year we are nearer to the blessed day when, if we have not parted, we can never be parted from our God. Think it not long to wait for Him, for Whom the disciple of His love waited for seventy years of loving longing, and to whom it might have seemed as though He willed that he should tarry till Himself came. Toward the end He said, "Behold I come quickly.[u]" And to thee, too, if thou lookest up steadfastly to thine everlasting home, all between shall seem but a span. Long and wide and far distant seem what thou seest along this earth. Look straight up towards thy home in heaven, and sun, moon, and stars seem close unto thee; yet nearer than the sun is He, thy Sun of Righteousness; nearer to thee, for He came down from heaven, as at this time, to dwell with thee and in thee; nearer to thee, for He is in thy thoughts, thy heart, thy soul, if thou seekest Him—one Spirit with thee. Nearer to thee, at thy very door, at thy very feet, in thy every action, are heaven and hell. He, our Salvation, draweth nigh. He Who brought us to the morning, will bring us to the evening; He Who bringeth us to the evening, will bring us on to the morrow. Satan would deceive men, and bid them delay this or that—the breaking off of a sin, the taking a shorter, straighter road, till to-morrow, and to-morrow, and to-morrow; and ye know too well that to-morrow never comes. God says, "I change not.[x]" Fear not for the morrow; I Who am with thee to-day, abide always. "I am the Beginning and the End.[y]" "He Who began a good work in thee will perform it unto the end.[z]" Where should there be any space between the

[u] Rev. xxii. 12. [x] Mal. iii. 6. [y] Rev. i. 8. [z] Phil. i. 6.

beginning and the end, wherein He should fail thee, Who is thy First Beginning, and shall be thy Last End?

Look ye, too, on to that day when He Whom ye would love shall say, "It is done." Think ye of that day when, with loving kindness, He shall say, "*well done*, good and faithful servant.[a]" "In due season ye shall reap, if ye faint not.[b]" Brief as are the joys of this world, briefer yet are its afflictions and its weariness; for, bitter in themselves, they are sweetened by the hopes of the everlasting sweetness of the life to come. How will all the longest trials shrink into a very nothing, when thy amazed soul shall enter into the brightness of His eternal Light and Love. "Though He tarry, wait for Him, because He will come, He will not tarry.[c]" "He Who sitteth on the throne saith, Behold thy Salvation cometh![d]" He will come to thee now unseen, by grace. He will come to thee, veiled in His Sacraments. He will come to thee in thy secret chamber; He will descend upon thee in thy prayers; He will ascend with thee, and bear thee in His Arms, that thou faint not, nor grow weary; He will be with thee in trouble; in temptation He will shield thee; in slippery places He will uphold thee; in the fever-heat of thy passions, He will be dew from above to cool thee; in the cold of desolation, He will be fire to kindle thee; in the aching of the heart, His everlasting Arms will be beneath, whereon to rest thee; in the tumults of thy soul, He shall hush thee with more than a mother's love; in thy fears, He shall fold thee in His Bosom; in loneliness, He shall be a still small Voice within thee; "when father and mother forsake thee, He shall take thee up;[e]" when thou passest through the valley of the shadow of death, He saith, "I will be with thee;[f]" around thee, in life; in death, to receive thee. "Thou shalt fear no evil, for I am with thee.[g]" When thou fearest, He shall lay His hand upon thee, (as He did upon His beloved disciple), and shall "strengthen thee, and shall uphold thee by the Right Hand of His righteousness,[h]" saying, "Fear not;

[a] S. Matt. xxv. 21. [b] Gal. vi. 9. [c] Hab. ii. 3; Heb. x. 37. [d] Is. lxii. 11.
[e] Ps. xxvii. 10. [f] Is. xliii. 2. [g] Ps. xxiii. 4. [h] Is. xli. 10.

I am the First and the Last; I am He that liveth and was dead; and behold I am alive for evermore, Amen; and have the keys of hell and of death. Behold I come quickly, and My reward is with Me, to give to every man according as his work shall be. I am Alpha and Omega, the Beginning and the End, the First and the Last. Even so, come, Lord Jesus.[1]"

[1] Rev. i. 17, 18; xxii. 12, 13, 20

SERMON II.

THE MERCIFUL SHALL OBTAIN MERCY.

ADVENT.[a]

ST. MATTHEW xxv. 31—46.

When the Son of Man shall come in His Glory, and all the holy angels with Him, then shall He sit upon the Throne of His Glory: And before Him shall be gathered all nations: and He shall separate them one from another, as a shepherd divideth his sheep from the goats: And He shall set the sheep on His Right Hand, but the goats on the Left. Then shall the King say unto them on His Right Hand, Come, ye blessed of My Father, inherit the Kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world: For I was an hungred, and ye gave Me meat: I was thirsty, and ye gave Me drink: I was a stranger, and ye took Me in: Naked, and ye clothed Me: I was sick, and ye visited Me: I was in prison and ye came unto Me. Then shall the righteous answer Him, saying, Lord, when saw we Thee an hungred and fed Thee? or thirsty, and gave Thee drink? When saw we Thee a stranger, and took Thee in? or naked and clothed Thee? Or when saw we Thee sick, or in prison, and came unto Thee? And the King shall answer and say unto them, Verily I say unto you, Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these My brethren, ye have done it unto

[a] Preached for a Charitable Institution. What was local is omitted.

Me. Then shall He say also unto them on the left hand, Depart from Me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels: For I was an hungred, and ye gave Me no meat: I was thirsty, and ye gave Me no drink: I was a stranger, and ye took Me not in: naked, and ye clothed Me not: sick, and in prison, and ye visited Me not. Then shall they also answer Him, saying, Lord, when saw we Thee an hungred, or athirst, or a stranger, or naked, or sick, or in prison and did not minister unto Thee? Then shall He answer them, saying, Verily I say unto you, Inasmuch as ye did it not to one of the least of these, ye did it not to Me. And these shall go away into everlasting punishment: but the righteous into life eternal.

Often as we have heard these solemn words, they come to us each time anew, with a deep penetrating awe, yet tempered with an almost overwhelming sweetness. Awe they must have; for that to which they relate is the final severance of all the mingled good and evil in this our confused state, whenceforward evil shall no more cleave to the good, and from the evil shall be stripped all seeming, all remains of, good. Each shall live on endlessly, perfect in love, or complete in hatred, yet neither shall approach the other. No shadow of evil shall in the good darken the life-giving brightness of the Divine Presence; no ray of light or love shall soften the darkness and hate of hell. Neither can then have any fellow-feeling with the other. Now God's saints on earth are fellow-sinners with those which shall be damned. As far as they have sin, although subdued, and by God's mercy again and again forgiven, they have that about them which is in common with devils, or with those who shall for ever be in eternal death with devils. Not, (God forbid), that they are themselves such. God is their life, although they have around them this body of death. But because they have it, they dare not judge another, lest they be judged, while their fellow-sinner is justified. *Then* God's judgment will have passed. He, in His unerring judgment, will have separated them one from another,

placed a deep gulf between them, wholly withdrawn all evil from the good, wholly withdrawn His Holy Spirit from the evil. The good cannot then pray for the evil, who can never be other than evil; the evil shall have no love left, that they can love the good. What seems now so much alike that we cannot distinguish it—so much seeming good there often appears to be in evil men, so much real evil there is in the good—shall be endlessly parted. We know not where the line shall be drawn; we see not how; yet a parting there shall be of those now alike in outward show, rank, employment, blood: a parting made by God's unerring judgment, a parting to the joy of our Lord, or to everlasting fire. The unrepentant father, mother, brother, sister, child, shall be parted for ever from those who have turned from their evil ways, and live. Close though one be to another, closer shall be the severance, for each has a nearer inmate, Him whom he serves, God or satan. "In that night" of darkness, there shall be two men in one bed, or in the field, two women grinding together, "the one shall be taken, the other left.[b]" Yea, this parting must go on in ourselves also. If we are to pass unharmed by the sword of the Cherubim, into our restored Paradise, the Sword of the Spirit, the word of God, must first have severed us from ourselves. If the fire of the Day of Judgment which shall burn up this world is to curl around us and destroy us not, the fire of God's Holy Spirit must first have consumed what is evil and earthly in us, refined us from our dross, so that death, which severs soul and body, shall but finish what God's Grace had begun, and free us finally from the body of this living death wherewith we are now encompassed and held down.

What comfort or sweetness can there be in the description of that which is so full of awe? It is that our Saviour speaks, that He, at that hour of unutterable awe and anxiety, and woe, and joy, Himself speaks and declares His love to those who love. Elsewhere, He speaks of the Day of

[b] S. Matt. xxiv. 40, 41; S. Luke xvii. 34-36.

Judgment, as "a Day of wrath," "a Day of trouble and distress," "a Day of wasteness and desolation," "a Day of darkness and gloominess," "a Day of clouds and thick darkness,[c]" "a Day of darkness and not light, very dark and no brightness in it,[d]" no ray of hope to cheer its gloom, to those whom it shall overwhelm; the "evil Day,[e]" "the great and terrible Day,[f]" "the great Day of the wrath of the Lamb,[g]" "the great and dreadful Day,[h]" "a Day cruel with wrath and fierce anger,"[i] "a Day which shall come with destruction from the Almighty;[k]" "and the mighty man shall cry there bitterly.[l]" Or, all from which our natural fears would shrink is gathered in one to increase its terrors; the stars of heaven falling unto the earth, the "heavens themselves shrivelling as a scroll before the fire, and passing away with a great noise,[m]" "the elements melting with fervent heat;[n]" "fire shall devour before Him and burn up His enemies on every side;[o]" "and the ungodly shall melt like wax at the Presence of God.[p]" All nature beneath our feet or above our head dissolved in fire, the earth and the works thereof burned up! "the sun black as sackcloth of hair, and the moon as blood.[q]" And more aweful yet, the scroll of our own conscience is brought forth to view in the light of the aweful Presence; "nothing hid which shall not be manifest;[r]" "every secret thing brought into judgment, whether it be good or bad;[s]" our "very hearts and reins searched out;[t]" "the counsels of our hearts made manifest;[u]" no word of folly or of sin "whispered in the ear," but "shall be proclaimed on the house-top;[x]" all our whole lives standing out before us, with every secret forgotten sin, in that dreadful light; deeds or words, which, if they were named aloud in this House of God, men might sink into the earth for shame, proclaimed before men and angels! how can there be aught of sweetness or of comfort at

[c] Zeph. i. 15. [d] Amos v. 20. [e] Ib. vi. 3. [f] Joel ii. 31.
[g] Rev. vi. 17. [h] Mal, iv. 5. [i] Is. xiii. 9. [k] Joel i. 15.
[l] Zeph. i. 14. [m] Rev. vi. 14. [n] 2 S. Peter, iii. 10. [o] Ps. xcvii. 3.
[p] Ib. lxviii. 2. [q] Prov. vi. 12. [r] S. Mark iv. 2 [s] Eccls. xii, 14.
[t] Rev. ii. 23. [u] 1 Cor. iv. 5. [x] S. Luke xii. 3

such a Day? "Who can dwell amid the everlasting burnings?[y]"

The comfort is, our Redeemer speaks. He, our Judge Himself, draws a veil for the time over the terrors of that day,—all but that terror which cannot in thought be severed from the Day of Judgment, that which is its very essence, that it is the endless parting—all else He veils over, and tells us whereby we may escape its terrors, whereby we may win Himself, our Judge, by love. We should think it much, were we on a trial before an earthly judge, that he was our friend; yet an earthly judge, although our friend, may not bend the strict rule of justice. Our Judge speaks of Himself, not only as one of us, "the Son of Man,[z]" but that our very trial shall be of those things wherein we may show Him our love. All else is for the time put aside. Glories there will be, we know, for "the faith of Patriarchs, the hope of Prophets, the labours of Apostles, the truth of Evangelists, the blood of Martyrs, the zeal of Confessors, the diligence of Teachers, the tears of Ascetics, the purity of Virgin souls:" there will be the hundred, the sixty, the thirty fold: star will differ from star in glory;[a] and while some shall "shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of their Father,[b]" well must many of us feel it to be for our earth-dimmed souls, if we be, by His mercy, the very meanest and lowest in that Heavenly Company, the tarnish of our souls at length cleansed off by our tears and His Precious Blood. Yet here our Blessed Lord is not speaking of rewards and of glory, but of that one mark which shall sever all those whom He shall bless from those He shall pronounce cursed; and this mark is love, love to Himself in His members.

It is then to us, as members of Himself, that He speaks. He shall say to those on His Right Hand, "Come ye blessed of My Father," and we know that it is in the Well-Beloved Son alone, "Who is over all God blessed for ever,[c]" that we are the "blessed of His Father." He speaks of love to Himself, as shown to those whom He

[y] Is. xxxiii. 14. [z] S. John v. 27. [a] S. Matt. xiii. 8; Cor. xv. 41.
[b] S. Matt. xiii. 43. [c] Rom. ix. 5.

vouchsafeth to call His brethren; "forasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these My brethren, ye have done it unto Me."

It is not, then, of any mere natural works that our Lord so speaks. Natural kindliness attains not to the rewards of grace; kindliness of this world reaches not to everlasting rewards. What is of the world ends with the world. What is to reach even unto God, must come forth from God, to Whom it flows back. What is to win a Divine Love, must be an effluence from that Love which it wins. Love which is to have power with the Heart of God, love for which we are to be beloved of the Father, must have first streamed forth from the everlasting Fount of Love, and circling through us to those in whom He dwelleth, reach again to Him, to Whom we would return love for love.

Much less, then, can the deeds of mercy, whose blessedness our Lord proclaims, co-exist with deeds of known sin. He cannot love with a Divine love, who loves what God loves not. "Doth a fountain send forth at the same time sweet water and bitter?[d]" Divine love cannot live with love of self. Divine love, when it is kindled in the soul, is a fire ever burning, ever active, darting itself forth upward to its Source, burning on the altar of the heart whereon it has descended, ever fed with the inward part of the burnt offerings dedicated to God, consuming as a whole burnt-offering, yea, like that which fell at Elijah's prayer, devouring every thing earthly, the burnt-sacrifice, and the wood, and the stones, and the dust.[e] The soul, capacious as it is, can have but one object of love. It may be expanded to receive Him Who filleth heaven and earth: it may contract itself around any sordid thing of earth. It cannot love both. "Ye cannot love God and mammon.[f]" "Love not the world, neither the things of the world. Whoso loveth the world, the love of the Father is not in him.[g]" He cannot love Christ, who, by any sin, wilfully causeth one of Christ's little ones, who believe in Him, to offend. "Love worketh

[d] S. James iii. 11.
[e] 1 Kings xviii. 38.
[f] S. Matt. vi. 24.
[g] 1 S. John ii. 15.

no ill to his neighbour, therefore love is the fulfilling of the law.[h]"

Such, then, must be the limits wherewith these gracious words of our Redeemer must be understood, that we neither restrain nor enlarge them unduly. The Blood of Christ must ever be our only hope. Through It alone can any sin be pardoned, any good be performed or accepted. This is His own ineffable love, out of which He died for sinners. Our Lord's words relate not to that in Himself, for which He pardoneth or accepteth us, but to that in us, for which He still vouchsafes to own us. Nor yet is it to be thought that this mark could exist in us apart from all other graces. Love, the foundation and summit of all virtues, the very bond of them all, which holds them together, and knits the soul in one to God, the life of faith, the mother of all good, the offspring of God, cannot be without them, since it is the very Presence of God in the soul. It is not then as a mark which may dispense us with cherishing all other graces, or which, if we think we have, we might be at ease, though struggling not to subdue all sin. God forbid! It is a mark above, not in place of, all other graces.

What then, it may be asked, is the special value of deeds of mercy, if the body must still be kept in subjection, if the same weary strife must still be kept up with the lusts which war in the members, if penitence still has its hardness, if in the memory of past grievous sin we must still wash our couch with our tears? These were indeed grudging questions; for every act of love to God or our neighbour were its own reward, even were there none beyond in store. Enough were it, that love is of God, that it likens us to God, Who is Love; that it traces His Image on our soul, and He must love the soul which bears the faint lineaments of His all-perfect love. Yet our Lord does meet even this mistrusting craving. He tells us in this place that it has an especial value in the Day of Judgment, is the special ground of acceptance, that they who have it shall be blessed for

[h] Rom. xiii. 10.

ever, they who have it not shall be cursed for ever. And we need not explain to ourselves, or understand "how can these things be[i]?" Enough that He, our Merciful Judge, the Truth, hath said it. Yet, elsewhere He tells us that office distinctly. Love and deeds of mercy are the chief appointed means for casting out present and for blotting out past sins. Mercy to man calleth down the mercy of God. He lays it as the foundation of His teaching, the entrance of His kingdom. "Blessed," He saith, "are the merciful, for they shall obtain mercy;" and of the penitent sinner, "Her sins which are many are forgiven, for she loved much;[k]" and the yet impenitent Pharisees our Lord exhorts, "Give alms of such things as ye have; and behold all things are clean unto you.[l]" And enlarging on our Lord's blessing, the Apostle says, "He shall have judgment without mercy that hath showed no mercy; and mercy glorieth over judgment.[m]" God loveth Himself to be conquered by love. Love for our lost world had power with God and prevailed. It brought down (as at this blessed time) the Creator to take the form of the creature. It brought the Lord of Glory to suffer shame, Him Who is blessed for ever in the love of the Father to endure for us the Father's wrath; the Author of Life to be subject to death. Love overcame the justice of God then; it forgave man, and paid the ransom due to Himself. And so He would that it should be still. He Who humbled Himself to become Man, humbles Himself still to dwell in man; in men, as members of Himself, to receive our love; and "mercy glorieth over judgment" as over one subdued and yielding to herself, for "love is strong as death" which it overcame, since "God is Love.[n]" And in other Scripture, "A good man is merciful, and lendeth, and (so the words mean) he shall maintain his cause in the judgment;[o]" and to show that it means chiefly the Great Day, there follows—"he shall not be moved for ever." Yea, as being an especial means of applying to our souls the Precious Blood of Christ, Holy

[i] S. John iii. 9. [k] S. Luke vii. 47. [l] Ib. xi. 41.
[m] S. James ii. 13. [n] Cant. viii. 6; 1 S. John iv. 16. [o] Ps. cxii. 5.

Scripture uses of the gifts of mercy the very terms of redemption. "Redeem," (such is the original word,) "thy sins by righteousness, and thine iniquities by showing mercy to the poor;[p]" and "By mercy and truth iniquity is purged away or atoned for;[q]" and alms are entitled a sacrifice,—"To do good and to distribute forget not; for with such sacrifices God is well pleased,[r]" even as He was with those of Abel and of Noah, which were types of the Sacrifice of His Son.

We may not shrink from such teaching, my brethren, lest we be found to be ashamed of the words of Christ. Rather let us gather it up, and pray we to receive it thankfully, for it is our Redeemer's Voice of love.

He then tells us that His boundless condescension in taking our nature upon Him, is not yet passed by. He came not down, as at this time, from Heaven, to be Immanuel, or God with us, and then, after a while, to cease so to be. He is still with us, by His Spirit; with us, by His blessed Sacrament; with us, in another way, by those who are most like what He was on earth, His poor; He is with us, by His gifts to us, with us also by the gifts which He vouchsafes to receive from us. By a bountiful contrivance of His mercy, He so vouchsafes to be with us, as by His Holy presence in us, to make our poor gifts acceptable through His in-dwelling Spirit of Love, whereof they are the fruits, acceptable doubly, in that they are accepted in Him, from Whom Alone all things have their acceptableness. He Whom prophecy foretold[s] as "the Poor and the Needy," He Who "had not where to lay His Head,[t]" He Who, while He fed Angels, deigned to be supplied by the ministry of others, to ask drink of an outcast, to be naked upon the Cross, to have His sacred Body wrapped in that linen cloth not His own, still vouchsafes to be hungry, athirst, naked, sick, houseless, in these His brethren, yea, as one has said, "the more His brethren, *because* poor, *because* abject, for such especially doth He call to brother-

[p] Dan. iv. 27. [q] Prov. xvi. 6. [r] Heb. xiii. 16.
[s] Ps. xli. 1. [t] S. Matt. viii. 20.

hood, the unknown, the despised;" for such He was Himself. He Who, for us, became a little Child, to sanctify childhood, may still be received, cherished in little children. "He who receiveth one such little child in My Name, receiveth Me.[u]" He still supplies us from Heaven, that He may, in these, receive from us on earth that for which, before men and Angels, He shall own Himself our debtor; for which, when Heaven shall be emptied of all its glorious Hosts, and Angels, Archangels, Powers, Dominions, shall stand gazing by, He Who supplied our wants, gave us what to give, and the love to give, He the Lord of all, shall, before all, own:—"Ye have fed Me, have sheltered Me, have visited Me, have received Me, have relieved Me, your King and your God; ye, through My love, have, in them, loved Me on earth, receive ye My love; ye, in them, have shared earthly things, your earthly inheritance, with Me on earth, lo, I share with you My inheritance, the inheritance which is Mine by right, that ye be co-heirs with Me in Heaven; ye, in pains, or weariness, or self-denial for them, shared My sorrows on earth, now share ye My joy, enter ye into the Joy of your Lord." He, our Just and All-knowing Judge, Whom we have so often offended, He Who has so much ground to condemn us for wasting His gifts, refusing His calls, disobeying His commands,—would, it might not be profaning the price of His Blood, and putting Him again to open shame, defiling perhaps anew His temple;—He is still, in His poor, present with us. He goeth up and down unknown among us, that we, reverencing His presence, may show our love towards Him, that we, ever loved by Him, may at length show Him our love, and He receive from us that for which He may forgive us, for which He may own our love.

Oh wonderful fruits of Incarnate love! Oh unutterable loving-kindness and lowliness of our Redeemer! Who would not only redeem us once for all, gave us not once only our new birth of God, retraced His Image on us, clothed us anew with the robe of righteousness, but when we had

[u] S. Matt. xviii. 5.

defaced that Image, rent and defiled our robe, wasted our Heavenly Inheritance, not restores us only, but would crown us; not forgives us only, but would account Himself our debtor for that for which He forgives us. "He that hath pity upon the poor lendeth unto the Lord, and look, what he layeth out shall be paid him again.[x]"

My brethren, may God more and more keep you from the evil one; yea, would that it were so, that many or most of you may have been kept from such deep wounds, the memory of which remains as a burden and a sorrow through the whole life. Yet too many, it is to be feared, would they examine their past lives by God's all-holy law, and pray to see themselves as God seeth them, might find there, even deadly sins, which they had smoothed over until they had forgotten their deadliness. An awakened heart will feel one deadly sin more than others will such loads of sin as might well break them down, or would break a less strong heart. Yet short of this, who may not discover a long dreary period, wherein perhaps he was loving himself only and the world, while he thought he was loving God; was subtly seeking man's praise, while he thought all was right with God; was rich in his own sight, while with God he was poor, and naked, and blind, and miserable; allowed one unheeded besetting sin to canker all which was good in him; has toiled perhaps, but for the wind. Who may not, at least in youth, while conscience was yet unawakened, or was lulled by petty stifling sins, remember that which he would give the whole world that it had not been? Yet it is there; one sore festering spot, under which his heart ever aches, some blighting memory, which saddens the past and casts a dark shade over his future. Each may know his own sore and his own grief; blessed if any know not of it, so that he own it to be of His great mercy that He hath upheld him, Who is the Restorer of the fallen. "Remember not the sins of my youth, nor my transgressions: according to Thy mercy remember Thou me, for Thy goodness' sake, O Lord.[y]" Blessed they, if they be yet awakened, who have

[x] Prov. xix. 17 [y] Ps. xxv. 7.

not been suddenly startled as out of a deep sleep, seen life wasted, when they thought all safe, deadly inroads made into their souls, "while they said, peace peace;[z]" found themselves benighted, as in a strange land, while they thought they were in their journey heavenward; found that they had scarce set out, or had all to undo; doubted even whether they had any love to God, so chill were their devotions; any faith, so dim and confused were their thoughts of Him, the Object of our faith; any trust in the Cross, for how could they think they believe in Him Whom they seem so little to love; any penitence, while their very penitence is so hard, and dry, and impenitent. "All the kingdoms of the world and the glory of them"[a] would they give for one deep gush of love, that they might know that they loved and lived.

To such and each of us, amid our several sins, our Lord says, in those gracious words, "Seek Me in My poor, and ye shall find Me. Ye cannot gain for yourselves the gift of tears; ye cannot warm your own chilled hearts; cannot gather together your own distracted thoughts; ye cannot undo what has been done, or regain what has been neglected; ye have spent your money for that which is not bread, and your labour for that which satisfieth not; ye have squandered your substance, and now these swine-husks will not satisfy you; but feed Me in My poor, and I will give you anew Angels' food; in them give Me to drink, and ye shall never feel that parching fire where no drop of water cools the tongue; clothe Me, in My naked ones, and I will clothe you anew in My "best Robe," the Robe of My Righteousness, that all your shame be not seen; visit Me, in My sick, and I will visit you now by the secret inspirations of My grace, in Paradise, by My Presence, and in the Day of Judgment I will look upon you, and will own you; receive one little child in My Name, and ye shall receive Me, born, as it were, as a little Child, in your hearts, renewing your decay, converting you, that ye should become again as little children, giving you back

[z] Jer. viii. 11; 1 Thess. v. 3. [a] S. Matt. iv. 8.

childlike hearts, childlike faith, and love, and trust, and purity, and innocence; ye shall receive Me, to dwell in your hearts by love, that, when ye fail, I may receive you into everlasting habitations, I may be, in the Day of Judgment, the Everlasting Rock, pierced for you, wherein to hide you, I, in Eternity, your Reward."

Such gracious words does our Good Lord say to us on every occasion of mercy, which He offers to us, and now again, at this season of the year, in which "He Who was rich, for your sakes became poor,[b]" does He again, in all the manifold distresses of the poor, come to you, by His tender Providence, so ordering it that ye should, in His stead, benefit His poor, that He may, in their stead, repay you with His own everlasting love; that your gifts abounding to their need, should abound much more to your own endless bliss. It is He Who speaketh to you by the cry of that distress which reacheth His own Ear in Heaven; which unrelieved, were a cry to Him against us; if ministered to, entreats His mercy for us. We know, most of us, if not in ourselves, yet at the sick or dying beds of those we love, what sickness is. Hunger, or thirst, or cold, or nakedness, many, perhaps scarcely to any great extent, know: sickness binds us all in one common bond of suffering; may it bind us in one common bond of love. And yet to us or to ours it has been mitigated by every aid which His goodness allows to soften His chastening stroke: we know not untimely death or fixed disease in those we love, the stay of our families, the desire of our eyes, the joy of our age, because there is none to minister until it is too late; we know not what it is to watch the strength decay, because there is no support; the fever burn, because there is nothing to allay; the heavy uncertainty is not made heavier to us, because none can answer our enquiries; when all is closed, we have not to think that God would have spared us the sorrow, had man had pity. Yet all these, and almost all of which our Lord speaks together, hunger, thirst, nakedness, sickness, friendlessness, are often gathered together upon

[b] 2 Cor. viii. 9.

our poor, whose scanty pittance, at all times too small, is, in their hour of utmost need, narrowed further still. Not the poor, but Christ Himself asks you. Reverence the poor, as ye would reverence Christ; cherish little ones, for they are the lambs of Christ; He is every where, inviting you, by those into whose hearts He has put to plan works of love for His members; every where are His members, neglected, suffering, dragging out dreary lives, dying hopeless deaths, because we have not yet a burning love for Him, Who came down to earth to kindle the fire of His love, that it might ascend as a memorial well-pleasing to Himself.

My brethren, gladly would I close with words of comfort only, with the blessedness of giving, treasures laid up with our Lord, to be repaid with usury; petty gifts, perishable goods, some brief toil, repaid with everlasting rest, the joy of His Presence, the penetrating, transforming, unutterable fulness of His love; for nothing, All; yea, the fulness of Him Who filleth all in all, to be our All, that we should rest for ever, never to thirst nor hunger more, ever satisfied, ever fed, by beholding His Face in love.

Yet doth not our Lord speak of these alone, and there is need not only to encourage those who give, but to rouse, while there is time, those who give not. It is one of the tokens of God's mercy towards us, we may trust, that He is, year by year, opening our eyes to the untold sufferings and privations of our poor; distresses, destitution, squalid wretchedness, vicious childhood, abandoned youth, premature decay of body and soul, because there is none to care for those for whom Christ died. Year by year is opening to us some fresh mine of wretchedness, some new form of the deep decay and misery produced by the crying sin of our wealthy nation, a reckless heaping up of riches, careless of the bodies and souls of those by whose toil they are gathered. It is of His tenderness that He has laid this mass of misery and neglect slowly more open to us, and has accustomed our hearts to give more largely, and is drawing some to give themselves, and has set forth more fully the

rewards of self-denying charity, and so made known to us deeper and deeper needs, and leadeth us on, step by step, to follow at a distance His self-denial. And yet we seem to be learning the extent of our ills, rather than how to remove them: they who give in proportion to their means are every where very few, they who scarcely give at all, or never give, the many. It were very sore to think of money wasted in luxury and idle show, or heaped up needlessly for those who shall waste it, to be worshipped as a god, or to make men great in this world; very sore were it to think of this, and that thereby those lasting joys, the brilliancy of the heavenly crown, our Redeemer's praise at the last Day, is forfeited. But what, my brethren, when all these things are a witness against men, and, in themselves suffice to their damnation! what when, if such could have all other virtues, and had not charity, it would profit nothing in that Aweful Day, on which our eternal doom depends. Could men, without charity, be sound in faith, gentle, chaste, upright, temperate, pure, all which could win the respect of their equals in society, and yet neglect Christ in His poor, we have the terrible sentence of our Judge—"Depart from Me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire." To "fare sumptuously every day," and neglect Lazarus at the door, is the one recorded sin of the rich man;[c] to neglect Christ's poor, (He telleth us Who willeth not that we should perish) is alone damnation.

It were an aweful thought to all of us, my brethren, to think of our Lord at this time severing us, who are here assembled, through this one quality of mercy. Sever then not, I beseech you, yourselves. And yet, as most perhaps are, from childhood to their graves, step by step, severing themselves, and moving, it may be, slowly on, yet in one direct course to their everlasting doom, so, on each occasion of showing real charity, if we make to ourselves excuses, and harden our hearts, and shut our ears to the cry of His poor, what do we but close the ears of our Judge against our own bitter fruitless cry? What would ye

[c] S. Luke xvi. 19-23.

hereby do but take your place among those whom He, our Redeemer, our only Hope and Stay, pronounces accursed, who, He forewarns us, shall be accursed, that we may not be found among them?

My brethren, look once more, as steadfastly as ye can, on that Aweful Day, when the thrones shall be set and the books opened, when the tempter shall become the accuser, and, for every forgotten sin, claim us as his own lawful property, as again having sold ourselves to him from whom Christ died to redeem us, as having fulfilled *his* commandments, obeyed *his* will, put on *his* likeness, walked in *his* steps, and having defaced the Image of our God, broken His loving commands, neglected the steps which He traced for us, in Sufferings and Blood, that we might follow them; think we of that dreadful strife when, even about the body of God's saint, he would dispute with Michael, the Archangel[d]; conceive we that dreadful parting, when Heaven shall fade from sight, Hell yawn from beneath, and we see the fire unquenchable, the never-dying worm, the rayless darkness, the prison from which none goeth forth, the fierce intolerable hatred of devils, and we must confess that we deserve it all.

Behold your accusers, yourselves, your Judge. Behold Satan at thy right hand, with burning hate, yet, for once, accusing thee justly; bringing before the Judge thy many evil deeds, thy few good; thy "idle words," thy "love of the world, the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, the pride of life;" how much thou didst for thyself and for him, how little for God, how thou didst spoil that little by some by-end of thine own; how thou servedst God a little, and then grewest weary, but wert never weary of serving thyself; see him bringing before thee God's calls which thou wastedst, the promises thou brakedst, the mercy thou despisedst, the Grace thou slightedst, the times of prayer thou neglectedst, the Love against which thou sinnedst, the souls which, in the days of thy carelessness, thou neglectedst, or by idle, or flattering, or wrong words, thou temptedst or didst injure, and then asking—"Is this Thy Son's robe or no? is this

[d] S. Jude 9.

ST. ALBERT'S COLLEGE LIBRARY

the Robe of Righteousness wherewith Thou didst anew clothe him? this the Raiment Thou badest him buy of Thee, that his shame might not appear? are these "filthy rags," this "garment spotted by the flesh," which Thou didst bid him hate, are these Thy livery, or are these the filthy garments which Thou didst once take from him, and he has anew put on? Whose tokens are these, mine or Thine? Is this Thy wedding garment? If not, do Thou, Who art the Truth, cast him forth, as Thou saidst."

And what should we say, brethren? Can ye deny, too many of you, a bitter, bitter past of sins, negligences, ignorances, "the remembrance" whereof "is grievous" unto you, "the burden intolerable," which ye would wash out, if ye could, with tears of blood? All which we have hid from ourselves now, or have forgotten, every deed, thought, word of shame, will throng around us then; none will be absent when God calleth them to our memory, but they will say, "Here we are." "We are thine," they will say, "thy offspring; God did not make us, for He made not sin." Thou wilt not be able to shake them off: how, even in this life, do they cling to the conscience, and haunt it! how much more then! What can we say, then, but "Enter not into judgment with Thy servant, O Lord.[e]" To Him, then, we would look. But what a sight His Holiness and His Love! Do not His very Wounds and open Side upbraid us with unthankfulness? Do not they say to us, in His Name, "Where is the fruit of these My Sufferings? Where the Price of My Blood? I set you above the glory I had with the Father. For you I was born an Outcast, in cold and poverty; for you I was despised, blasphemed, set at nought, spit upon, scourged, crucified. To what have ye preferred Me? What have ye not preferred to Me?" How shall we then win our Judge? He cannot be resisted, for He is All-mighty. He cannot be deceived, for He knoweth the secrets of our hearts, which He shall bring before us. He cannot be an "Accepter of persons,[f]" for He is All-just. What will He accept? He hath told thee,—"Love."

[e] Ps. cxliii. 2. [f] S. Luke xx. 21.

"Forasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these My brethren, ye have done it unto Me." He Who will own nothing without charity, not "prophesying in His Name," "in His Name casting out devils,[f]" not "giving thy body to be burned," "selling all thy goods to feed the poor,[g]" He will, He cannot but, own charity. For it is Himself, His Spirit within thee. Self-denying, self-emptying charity, is the faint shadow of that love which brought Him down from the Bosom of the Father, clothed Him with the form of a Servant, to save us sinners. It is, in a manner, to be as He was. His Cross hallows it; His Cross preaches it; His Cross sustains it; His Cross rewards it. He preaches to us from His Cross,—"This is My commandment, that ye love one another: *as* I have loved you, that ye also love one another.[h]" "Love ye Mine, *as* I have loved you; not in word, but in deed, with a deep self-sacrificing love." And whom He has "conformed" to His Image, in love and patience, in well doing to His brethren here, He will make like the Image of His glory in Heaven. Whom He hath made thus far like to the Son of Man, in self-forgetful love, He will make like to the Son of God, "for they shall see Him as He is.[i]"

Think, then, what it will be, amid the terrors of that Day, on which hangs all Eternity, to see Thy Judge's Face shine upon thee, the earnest of that love which shall fill and satisfy His own with the very love of God, wherewith the Father loveth the Son: think again what it would be, at that hour, that His Face, on Which alone hangeth thy only hope, should be turned away from thee, unpitying then to thee, because thou pitiedst not Him, in His poor, sick, outcast, or His little ones: and, as ye would obtain mercy in that day, be diligent, as ye can, out of your abundance, or out of your deep poverty, through the cup of cold water, or the widow's mite, or large glad giving out of your abundance, through the toils of thy whole self, whereto thou art called, body or mind, watchfulness or tender care, to show

[f] S. Matt. vii. 22.
[g] 1 Cor. xiii. 3.
[h] S. John xv. 12, 17.
[i] 1 S. John iii. 2.

all deeds of mercy in this. "With what measure ye mete, it shall be measured to you again.[k]" Grudge not yourself heavenly crowns, the brightness of the bliss of God, the overflowing fulness of His unutterable love, His good pleasure, the life-giving light of His Countenance, the yearnings of His tender mercies, the gift of Himself to be your bliss; cause not Him to turn His Face from you, by turning your face from His brethren; for surely with Him and in Him is all good, and all delight, and entrancing joy for ever and ever.

[k] S. Matt. vii. 2.

SERMON III.

PREPARE FOR SEASONS OF GRACE.

CHRISTMAS EVE.

JOSHUA iii. 5.

"*And Joshua said unto the people, Sanctify yourselves: for to morrow the* LORD *will do wonders among you.*"

THE Grace of God at all times awaits, forecomes, accompanies, follows, encompasses us. It is within us, and without us. It comes to us through ordinances, and without them. It never fails us, if we never fail It. It is every where, for It is the Holy Spirit, Who is every where, since He is God. It waketh us morning by morning, if we will hearken to It. It speaketh to us in the streets.[a] Silence is Its very voice: the hushed soul ever hears It. We have but to enter into ourselves and It speaks to the heart. We have but to close our senses to the vanities of the world, and we hear It and know Its voice. For through It do we thus close our senses. It is about our path, and about our bed. It is even, through the unwearied mercy of our God, hard to get rid of It. For if we listen not to It, but go contrary to It, It also goes contrary to us, and confronts us, and speaks to us in a voice of loving sternness, and bids us turn back into ourselves, and into the narrow path, and to God, lest we

[a] Prov. i. 20.

perish. Had It not been very patient, and long-suffering, we had all been long ago in hell. If our souls are alive, through It and in It they live. It is the life of the soul, as the soul is of the body. God upholds the body in life; Himself is the Life of the Soul. If we are not naked in God's sight, It is the Robe which clothes us. When Adam lost it, he became miserably naked, and hid himself. If we are not blind, it is the Light which, streaming down through the windows of Heaven from the Sun of Righteousness, enlightens us. It is all in all to us. It is Light, and Life, and Peace, and Comfort, and Joy, and Fire of Love, for It is the Presence of God in the soul: It is the Comforter, the Father and the Son making Their abode in the soul through the Spirit.

But although Grace is ever around and in those who have not finally rejected It, there are special seasons at which It comes to individuals and to the Church; seasons in which Grace does not only trickle down as the dew, but runs down like a river, sweeping away all the barriers of earthliness, and bearing us onward like a tide; seasons which if we miss, we know not what we lose; the wave has past by, and we who might have been borne upon its crest, and carried safe, are tossing to and fro in a perilous sea. Such seasons, to individuals, are the first drawings of the child's tender soul to God; its first stirrings at the thought that it is not a citizen of this earth, that it belongs to Heaven, to eternity, to God; its first yearning to go forth out of itself to be for ever God's. Such again are the first great solemn acts of God's Providence to it; the first time death comes very near to it, and it sees the earthly close of those it loves, and in it the nothingness of this life, and the reality of the unseen world, and the beauty of Paradise, which seems to open to it, as it follows thither the parting soul it loves. Such again are its first strong upliftings in prayer, and following the drawings of God, and pantings after Communion with Him, as it seeks to rise on, and on, and on, tremblingly, yet aspiringly, if by any means it might reach to God! or its quiet waiting within itself, if so be He would

come down to it. Such again are, later, its Confirmation, when it gathers itself for an earnest strife with evil, and in God's Name bids defiance to the powers of the evil one, and anew renounces the evil world with which it is more encompassed, and longs for God's instrengthening Mercy. Such is its first approach to the mysteries of its Saviour's Body and Blood, and its new mode of being, when in this wonderful way, its Saviour first dwelleth in it, and it in Him. Such, if these are unhappily wasted, are the first strong fears of Hell, borne in upon the soul by God, the first time it sees as a handwriting on the wall, "Thou art weighed in the balance, and found wanting;[b]" its first deep dread that it may be for ever severed from God, and be for ever the sport of devils, and their companion. And if God's mercy overcome its wilfulness, such is the first return of the poor prodigal to his Father's house; the first turning of the penitent's soul to God, when it pours out all its miseries at its Saviour's Feet, hides them and itself in His "deep and sorrowful Wounds," and hears, either through His Minister, or sometimes directly from Himself, "Thy sins are forgiven thee,[c]" "go and sin no more.[d]"

Such to the elder Church, were those great barings of His Almighty Arm, in the chastening of the heathen or their own, or the outpourings of His benefits, or His calls to repentance; the deliverance from Egypt; the wonders by the Red Sea, and in the wilderness, and the entrance into the promised land; the raising up of Judges; the glory in the dedication of the temple; the mighty deeds of Elijah and Elisha; the sending of the Prophets; the repentance under Josiah; the cleansing of the captivity; the Presence of His Son, our Redeemer, in the Flesh.

Such to the Christian Church was that day in which it was first formed, that special outpouring of the Spirit, when a people of the Lord "was born[e]" at once, and God the Holy Ghost came to dwell in the Church of Christ, never again to depart from it. Such have been the cleansings of persecutions, the inroads of Anti-Christs, the rendings of

[b] Dan. v. 27. [c] S. Luke vii. 28. [d] S. John viii. 11. [e] Is. lxvi. 8.

heretics, the scourges of God, or the endurance and blood of Martyrs; Christ's life in His Saints; His preachers of repentance; every thing whereby He has made known His Presence, and said to His Church when slumbering through ease, "Awake thou that sleepest, and arise from the dead, and Christ shall give thee light.[f]"

Such, again, in a more peaceful way, both to Churches, and us their single members, are, year by year, the seasons of the great Mysteries of the Faith. Heaven, ever "open to all believers," since in our Nature our Lord and our God, Christ Jesus, Man and God, hath entered there, is open wider then, when the seasons come round, wherein by His "Holy Nativity and Circumcision," His "Cross and Passion," His "Precious Death and Burial," His "Glorious Resurrection and Ascension," He wrought and perfected our salvation in earth and Heaven, or by the Coming of the Holy Ghost sealed His gifts in us, which He had wrought for us. There is *then* a closer Intercommunion between Heaven and earth, when God the Son came down from Heaven to be Man with men, and make our earth a seed-plot for Heaven; or God died, that men might live; or Man, in God, sat on the Right Hand of God.

Year by year He renews His Mysteries of Mercy then. Year by year He is born anew in the hearts which watch by His Sacred Infancy, and long, through the virtue of his Holy Childhood, to become anew as little children. Year by year the cleansing Blood drops from His Cross, healing the wounds of those who sit under Its shadow, or penitently, with the Magdalene, clasp Its foot. Year by year It raises to a new life, hidden with His Own in God, those who, in penitence, have, through His Cross, died to sin. Year by year He lifts to Heaven those who desire, in "heart and mind, thither to ascend, and with Him continually to dwell." Year by year He cometh down to dwell in those who, by His Grace, cleanse their hearts for His In-dwelling, and cast out, more and more, all idols thence, that He Alone, the Lord of the heart, may dwell and reign there.

[f] Eph. v. 14.

But although He comes to all alike who look for Him, He doth not come alike to all. He filleth all; but all do not alike contain Him. He, the Same, dwelleth in the Seraphim, on fire with love, and close around His Throne, and in the poorest, weakest penitent; but not in the same way. As is the vessel, so is the "new wine" of the Spirit, which it containeth. All may alike be full, yet all have not the same largeness. As is the longing, so is the Gift. "Open thy mouth wide, and I will fill it.[g]" The wider the mouth of the soul is opened by thirsting desire for God, the more largely will He fill it. Our capacity to receive Him, is our longing for Him. The greater the hunger of the soul after Righteousness, the more will He feed and satisfy it Who is our Righteousness.

And so, whenever God would draw near to man, He would have man prepare for that awful nearness. We cannot on the instant change our whole tone of mind. We cannot at one moment jest, the next be devout; at one moment care for earth, the next for Heaven; at one, love the creature for itself, the next, the Creator for Himself; at one, love vanity, at the next, eternity; at one, be scattered abroad amid things passing, and the next, be gathered in one into Him, Who Alone abideth; at one, be filled with the cares and pleasures and good things of this life, at the next, be emptied of self, that we may receive Him Who, as now, emptied Himself, that He might give us His fulness. Nature itself tells us that we cannot pass suddenly from one to another. If we have heavy news to convey, we try to prepare the mind, that they burst not at once upon it. Sudden joy has often taken away life or reason. If a funeral meets your eye suddenly, amid mirth, you feel a sudden shock. If a solemn thought crosses the soul, in laughter, it recovers itself as it can, hastily and confusedly together, and the very disorder of the mind shows that the sudden change is against nature. The soul feels ashamed that it was so relaxed before, so little in the state wherein it would receive the Heavenly Visitant. It seems to have laid aside the dress of

[g] Ps. lxxxi. 10.

the soul, and cannot at once recover it, or go to meet Him. The wise virgins had to "trim their lamps," when the piercing "cry was made"—"Behold the Bridegroom cometh, go ye out to meet Him.[h]" The bride, in the Canticles, missed Him, for a time, Whom her soul loved, when unprepared for His coming, "I have put off my coat, how shall I put it on?" "I opened to my Beloved, but my Beloved had withdrawn Himself, and was gone: my soul failed when He spake, I sought Him: but I could not find Him; I called Him, but He gave me no answer.[i]"

And this teaching of God in our hearts He enforced in the outward nearness of His visible Presence. When He willed to appear in awe on Mount Sinai, for three days was the congregation to prepare itself. "Go unto the people," He said to Moses, "and sanctify them to-day and to-morrow, and let them wash their clothes, and be ready against the third day; for the third day the Lord will come down, in the sight of all the people, upon Mount Sinai.[k]" And the feasts of the Lord were to be "proclaimed[l] in their seasons." Whether in chastisement or in mercy there is a season of preparation. Whether God would give them flesh to eat in the wilderness, or lead them over Jordan, or take out from among them him who had taken the accursed thing, it is still one word—"Sanctify yourselves against to-morrow.[m]" Even to Pharaoh and to Korah it is said "To-morrow shall this sign be." "To-morrow shall the Lord do this thing in the land;" "to-morrow the Lord shall show who is His.[n]" "To-morrow," saith the vision of Samuel to Saul, "shall thou and thy sons be with me.[o]"

If such was the preparation for the type and shadow, what for the Reality? If such for the outward visible symbols and tokens of God's Presence, what for His inward actual In-dwelling? If such for the miraculous sustenance of the body, what for the Food of the soul? If such for the entrance into the temporary land of rest, the visible Canaan,

[h] Matt. xxv. 6. 7
[i] Cant. v. 3, 6.
[k] Ex. xix. 10, 11.
[l] Lev. xxiii. 4, see 2, 31, 37.
[m] Num. xi. 18; Josh. iii. 5, 7, 13.
[n] 1 Sam. xxviii. 19.
[o] Ex. viii. 23; ix. 5; Num. xvi. 5.

for "carnal ordinances[p]" and animal sacrifices, and rites which cleansed not the conscience, what when the soul itself is to become the resting-place of God, to keep the Feast where the Sacrifice is "the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world;" to be cleansed by its Saviour's Blood, to have Christ, as it were, new-born within it! If such the entrance into the type of Heaven, what when Heaven and earth are united in one! And so an Apostle's voice warns us, "Let a man examine himself," sift himself, "and so let him eat of that Bread and drink of that Cup.[q]" And God has taught the Church to place longer seasons of preparation before the greater Mysteries of the Faith. So now, when after three weeks of expectation, that Blessed Feast of His Birth in the flesh for us, is all but dawning upon us, has she given us a Vigil, that the body being lightened by fasting, the soul may, with the shepherds, better watch. So, on the night of the darkness of this world, there may shine a light from heaven, and not Angels' voices now, but His own, may say, in our inmost souls, "fear not; for unto *you* is born this day a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord." "Sanctify yourselves," said God, by Joshua, "for to-morrow the Lord will do wonders among you." Wonderful things indeed did He, as ye know. Nature trembled before its God; the waters, contrary to their nature, stood on an heap. "Jordan was driven back" at the approach of the Ark of the Presence of God. Yet what was their "to-morrow" to ours? what their wonders to those by which God has wrought our salvation? Faint shadows of the True Ineffable Substance! Great was it that water should forget its nature, the "sun stand still" in his course, strong walls fall down at the sound of a trumpet, and the "Lord hearken to the voice of a man.[r]" It was an aweful Presence of God. It shook the hearts of the idolaters, and of God's own people, not for one day only, but for their whole lives. "They feared Joshua, as they feared Moses, all the days of his life.[s]" We should stand in awe if we saw the like. Yet after a while, things were as though they had never been. "The

[p] Heb. ix. 1-9. [q] 1 Cor. xi. 28. [r] Josh. iv. 14. [s] Josh. x. 14.

waters of Jordan returned unto their place, and flowed over all their banks as they did before." Sun and moon held their courses as heretofore, and shall do so until "the sun shall be turned into darkness and the moon into blood, in the Great and Terrible Day of the Lord.[t]" Not so when, as now, God became Man. Greater are the miracles of God's Humility than the miracles of His Power. He, God, the Word, "*became* Flesh," became as one of His creatures, when He put forth His Love. His creatures obeyed His word; they changed their order, but for a time only; they became as they had not been, they became again as they had been. The Eternal, Unchangeable Word could not change. The "Godhead" was not changed into flesh. The Divine Person of the Word is what It was; yet hath It united with It that which It had not. "He took the Manhood into God," and that (the Church teacheth) "never to be divided." He Who, as at this time, was born among us, is as truly Man as He is truly God; "Very Man," as born of His human Mother; "Very God," as being everlastingly Begotten of the Everlasting Father: His Person, as before, Divine, but in that Person (as it was not before), our human nature united with His Divine. Yea, since He hath so willed, He can no more cease to be Man, than He can cease to be God. God He ever was, by Nature, Man He willed to become, through the everlasting "Love wherewith He loved us,[u]" which is His Nature, for "God is Love.[x]" He is everlastingly what He everlastingly willed to be. Through all eternity shall all the Heavenly Hosts, who never fell, with us adore Him Who, Very God, "for us men and for our salvation became" and is "Very Man."

Well, then, might the Apostle cry out—"Oh, the depth of the riches both of the Wisdom and Knowledge of God;[y]" Depth as unfathomable as His own Nature, which is Infinite! Well may we take to ourselves the words of Holy Scripture, "Sanctify yourselves, for to-morrow the Lord will do wonders among you." For, as to-morrow, He, Whose Name is Wonderful, the Wonderful Counsellor,

[t] Joel ii. 31. [u] Eph. ii. 4. [x] 1 S John iv. 16. [y] Rom. xi. 33.

the Mighty God, the Everlasting Father, the Prince of Peace,[z] is "born for us, to us given," as a babe, in swaddling clothes, lying in a manger. Yea, and by a nearer birth, He is born in childlike hearts, or hearts which would be as little children; for the Apostle says, "I travail in birth of you, until Christ be formed in you.[a]" He is born in us when He is formed in us. He formeth Himself in us, by renewing His Image and Likeness on us. He reneweth His own Likeness in us, by stamping upon us the seal of His Spirit. He becometh "one Spirit" with us," for Scripture saith, "he who is joined unto the Lord is one spirit.[b]" He Who took flesh in the Virgin's womb, and dwelt among us, will dwell anew in these our houses of clay. "His Holy Spirit," if we pray for It, "will come upon" us, and "the Power of the Highest will overshadow" us; He will take from us our hearts of stone, and give us hearts of flesh; He, the Son of God, by Nature, will make us more and more sons of God, by Grace; Himself, the Son of God, dwelling in us, by the Spirit, and we in Him.

And how, then, shall we prepare to meet Him? How to receive Him? In the same way, wherein He cometh to us. And how cometh He? In great humility, as a little child. He cometh to give us of His Majesty, but only if we receive His Humility; He cometh to be born in us, but only if we, in Him, die to the world; He Who "dwelleth in the Highest Heaven, and inhabiteth Eternity," cometh to dwell in us, but only if we be of a "contrite and humble spirit," "to revive the spirit of the humble, and to revive the heart of the contrite ones.[c]" He cometh to give us of His Divine Nature, if first we seek to have our human hearts purified as a mansion prepared for Himself, and cleansed by His Holy Spirit; even as the Holy Spirit first overshadowed His Mother, and "therefore," Scripture saith, "that Holy Thing which shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God.[d]" As He saith, "To them that received Him gave He power to become the sons of God.[e]"

[z] Is. ix. 6. [a] Gal. iv. 19. [b] 1 Cor. vi. 17.
[c] Is. lvii. 15. [d] S. Luke i. 35. [e] S. John i. 12.

"Sanctify yourselves," saith God, that is, "separate yourselves from things unholy, that ye may be separated unto Me, and I may hallow you, and make you holy." We cannot hallow ourselves; but we can, by His Grace, put off things unholy. We cannot fit ourselves for His In-dwelling; but we can, through Him, cast out all idols from our hearts, His Temple, that they offend not His Holy Eyes. We cannot fill ourselves; but we can, by His Goodness, empty ourselves of all, "the lusts of the flesh, the lust of the eye, the pride of life;" all which "is not of the Father, but is of the world,[f]" that He may give us of His Fulness. We cannot give to ourselves Him, the True Bread from Heaven, nor create in ourselves hunger after Him, our Righteousness; but we can abstain, through His gracious aid, from filling our bellies with the swine-husks, this world's goods, and vanities, and accursed pleasures, which make men loathe, as "light bread,[g]" "the Manna Which cometh down from Heaven.[h]"

This is indeed "a night much to be observed unto the Lord,[i]" a night full of light, in which "Light shone on us that walked in darkness, and dwelt in the land of the shadow of death;[k]" a Light, unto which that created light, and the very "glory of the Lord,[l]" which shone round about the shepherds, is but darkness. Light Which, if we follow It, shall lead us to the land of everlasting light and glory; Light "Which shall shine in the darkness of our hearts," "more and more until the perfect day;[m]" Light whereof "the day star" only shall arise in our hearts here, but which shall "transform us from glory to glory,—as by the Spirit of the Lord,[n]" until we come to the full, loving glory of our Sun of Righteousness; Light, the Effluence of Him Who is "Light of Light," and Who "came," as now, "a Light into the world, that whosoever believeth in Him should not abide in darkness.[o]"

Oh then, if we "have been sometime darkness," seek we

[f] 1 S. John ii. 16. [g] Num. xxi. 5. [h] S. John vi. 32, 33, 34.
[i] Ex. xii. 42. [k] Is. ix. 2. [l] S. Luke ii. 9.
[m] Prov. iv. 18. [n] 2 Cor. iii. 18. [o] S. John xii. 40.

now to be "light in the Lord.[p]" Let us now "cast away the works of darkness, and put on the armour of light." Let us follow on after Him, Who saith, "I am the Light of the world; he that followeth Me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of Life;[q]" a Light which shall "guide our feet into the way of peace.[r]" For He Himself, as Man, is the Way to Himself as God; He, our Light here, is the Way to "that Light Which no man can approach unto,[s]" the Light of the Bliss-giving Countenance of God.

In that Light we could not endure any remaining darkness in ourselves. One spot of this world's darkness would mar the Beauty and Glory of Heaven. Seek we then out this night, if as yet we have not, by the Light of His Word, and His own Enlightening Spirit, some dark spot, some corner of our heart, that it may receive His Light. Let us not, in any thing, be of those who "hate the light, and come not unto the light, lest their deeds should be reproved.[t]" Shrink we not back, from any pain it may cost us, to admit that "burning and shining light[u]" into our hearts, sore as it may be to see our own "darkness, which may be felt,[x]" our own vileness, and filthiness, and deformity, and how, in that light, our best deeds become "as filthy rags,[y]" our very light becomes darkness.

"Wondrous things" indeed hath He "done among us" on the morrow; not *done* among us only, but *been* among us; not *among* us only, but *with* us; "God with us," by His Union with our nature; "God with us," by His Indwelling in ourselves. And what shall we bring Him? Oh! wondrous exchange! We need but bring Him our sorrows, and miseries, and sins,—cast them down at His Feet, in His manger-cradle, and, through His Grace, leave them there, and He will forthwith clothe us with some portion of His Holiness, and give us of His Joy. We need but bring Him of our emptiness, and He will give us of His Fulness; bring Him broken hearts, and He will re-make them, and bind them up, that they may be re-made, as ves-

[p] Eph. v. 8. [q] S. John viii. 12. [r] S. Luke i. 79 [s] 1 Tim. vi. 16.
[t] S. John iii. 20. [u] Ib. v. 35. [x] Ex. x. 21. [y] Is. lxiv. 6.

sels of His Glory, to contain Himself; feed us with His Body, which He now took, that It might be broken for us; wash us with His Blood, Which He shed for the remission of our sins; gladden us with the "new Wine[z]" of His Spirit, so that we should go forth out of ourselves, new born as little children in His Holy Childhood, dying in His Death, living, by His Life in us, to rise again, through His Resurrection, Who is our Resurrection and our Life, on that glorious Morrow which setteth not, the Morrow of His Eternity, and Rest, and Joy, and Peace, into which His Redeemed shall enter, the Joy of their Lord. To which He, of His mercy, bring us sinners, He, our Only Saviour and Redeemer.

[z] Zech. ix. 17.

SERMON IV.

GOD WITH US.

CHRISTMAS.

St. Matt. i. 23.

"*Behold, a Virgin shall be with child, and shall bring forth a son, and they shall call His Name Emmanuel, which, being interpreted, is God with us.*"

It is part of the majesty of Holy Scripture, as being the word spoken by the Eternal Word, that it is full of manifold meanings, embracing, in itself, all time, and itself, as the Word from Whom it issues, enduring for ever, reaching to the height of Heaven and the depths of Hell, God's Holiness and man's sin. It is verified again and again in the endless changes and variations of man's history. Like Him, it speaketh to our hearts, readeth our thoughts long before, scanning us from head to foot, laying us bare to ourselves, piercing or healing us, "a discerner of the intents of the heart." It telleth, in the past, of the future, and the future, as it shall again and again be, till the end come, as being a part of the Omniscience of God. And for this, it needs not, as we, many words. Rather, in few words, it reveals much; herein showing itself different from man's words, in which it comes to us clothed; for we, with many

words, scarcely utter all our meaning; it, by reason of the Wisdom and Spirit dwelling in it, declares much in few. And so, when we know one meaning of any words of Holy Scripture, we should beware of thinking that we know all their meanings; lest we cease to search, and seeking not, find not.

Of this sort eminently are those amazing words "God with us." They contain in themselves the whole history, and course, and means of man's redemption. In their highest sense they express that unfathomable Mystery, that "God" hath been "with us," in our nature, that the Creator has taken His creature into Himself; but, by virtue of that gracious mystery, they declare God's Presence in His Church, and "with" and within the souls of her members.

For all man's history turns on this, to be with or without God, having or not having God with us. All the history of man's decay is but one manifold exhibition of being without God. All his pursuits, arts, inventions, ambition, aggrandisements, passions, lusts, wars, amusements, are, in themselves, but varied forms of godlessness. All his restoration, through revelations, guidances, Providence, chastenings, mercies, is but a course wherein God draweth nigh to him, and draweth him nigh unto Himself. To "live without God in the world," is man's one, though varied misery; "God with us" is the centre and circumference of the Divine Mercy.

And of this central mercy, the very centre is (how should it not be?) the mystery of this blessed Festival, the Incarnation of the Eternal Word, "God manifest in the flesh." "He Who gave His Son for us, how should He not with Him freely give us all things?" The life of man, as it is the reward of the Saints, is the Sight and Presence of God. All man's fall has been a forgetfulness, a hiding himself from God. As fallen, he could not bear to see God; he could not bear to look upon himself in the Light of God. "The ungodly perish at the Presence of God." Restlessness, busy schemes, ambition, luxury, gluttony, worldliness, study of man's praise, self-deceit, are but man's conscious or unconscious contrivances, to cast a mist about him, so

that the glorious light of God should not break in upon him, and shine upon his darkness, and shew him how foul is that darkness. All are but varied tokens of one deep disease. And God's remedy has been to accustom men to receive Him. Visibly or invisibly He has come to them, in the garden, ere they were yet cast out: to the Patriarchs, the Prophets, Judges, in the form as though of man: Enoch walked with Him, Unseen, as far as we know, by his bodily eyes; to Noah He came, and taught him to build the ark; to Abraham He promised Himself, as his Reward, and bade him "walk before Me, and be thou perfect;" He deigned to eat and drink with him; to Jacob He gave strength to wrestle with Him, and prevail; to Moses He spake face to face; to Isaiah He showed His glory; to the Prophets He, the Word of God, came; to Job in the whirlwind; to Elijah in the "still small voice;" on Ezekiel His Hand rested; on the Judges He came vehemently down, and bore them on to prevail against His enemies; on the Seventy with Moses, that they prophesied; with the whole people He was, in the pillar of the cloud, in the lightnings of Sinai; "the Face[a] of God," i. e. the Son, Who is the Eternal Image of the Eternal Father, went with them, and saved them; He dwelt in the Shechinah, the bright Presence of God, in the Tabernacle and the Temple; with the Three Children He was in a "form[b] as of the Son of God;" to Daniel He appeared "in night visions," as "the Son of Man.[c]"

And then, at last, He, Who had thus "not left Himself without witness," and had been accustoming man to receive Him, came. Before, He had appeared chiefly to the faithful, to be by them acknowledged and adored; now, He came into the world, to be by them rejected. Before, He came as God, for a season, and then withdrawing Himself; now, as Man, to sojourn: before, in glory visible mostly to the bodily eye; now, invisible, except to the eye of faith: before, in Majesty; now, in Humility. He Who had, from time to time, visited Patriarchs and Prophets, in the *form*

[a] Ex. xxxiii. 14, 15. [b] Dan. iii. 25. [c] Ib. vii. 13.

of man, came as Man; He Who had shone in visible glory, in the Tabernacle, Himself tabernacled among us, and they whose eyes God opened "beheld[d] His Glory, the Glory as of the Only Begotten of the Father," "God with us." In neither part was He wanting. Perfect God, He became Perfect Man, that He might thereby perfect the whole of man. He "sanctified[e] Himself," that we might be sanctified in Him. He held back from nothing. The Lord of Heaven and earth did not disdain to lie hid in the Virgin's womb; the Omniscient deigned, as Man, to seem to receive and to put forth increase of knowledge;[f] the Eternal Word not "to[g] know to cry, my father, my mother;" He "Who[h] upholdeth all things by the word of His Power" to be carried in the arm; the Eternal Will of the Father not to do His Own Will; the Holy One of God to be tempted by His unholy creature; the Lord of Life to suffer death; the Judge to be judged.

Such, then, is the two-fold force of the title Emmanuel, "God with us," "God" in Himself, but "with us" and such as we; not "with us" merely by mercy, or care, or providence, or protection, but "with us" as one of us; not *doing* only great things for us, but taking our nature on Him, and therein suffering for us and with us; not restoring us by His word, as He created us, but by becoming as one of us; not by raising us by the hand when fallen, but Himself humbling Himself to us; Himself sinking to us, that He might rise with us; might ascend to His Father, girt round with us, placing at God's Right Hand, united with Himself, and as part of Himself, the nature which He had redeemed. Great had been the mercy that we alone, who had fallen from God, should be restored to Him; that when He passed by "the Angels who left their first estate,[i]" He should have regard to us, who had defaced His Image, wherein He created us. But that He should do this by

[d] S. John i. 14. [e] Ib. xvii. 19.

[f] See on S. Ath. against the Arians, p. 461, b. 462, c. d. 464, f. 466, g. 468, k. 471, 0, 473, p. 474, 9. Library of the Fathers.

[g] Is. viii. 4. [h] Heb. i. 3. [i] S. Jude 6.

coming Himself to us, that to us, who dwell on this small earth, less than the least of the countless multitudes of His Creation, He, the Creator of all, should come; the Immortal should clothe Himself with our mortality, the Creator take the creature into Himself, He, the Unchangeable God, take that into the Godhead which was not before, the Eternal Son not *appear* only in our nature, but unite it more closely to Himself than our souls to our bodies; (for they shall be separated, for a time, by death; the Godhead shall never be divided from His Manhood); this is indeed an unsearchable depth of Divine Humility and Mercy, whereat we may well turn dizzy! Us, as well as the Eternal Son, hath He indeed "made a little lower than the Angels," that He might, in Him, "crown" us "with glory and worship." He passed by all the Heavenly Hosts, Angels, Archangels, Mights, Thrones, Dominions, Principalities, Powers, the Cherubim and Seraphim, all the ninety and nine orders of Heaven, who went not astray; passed by, without a restoring look, the fallen Angels, whose captives we were, and came down to us, in ourselves, the last of His rational Creation, and who had since defaced, one by one, every feature of His Image, yea, and, as He knew, would again deface It, when He had retraced It on us. How had we not marred It when He came! so that we had become loathsome to ourselves, and the more loathsome when we saw it not. What was there to "call unto the deep" of Divine Mercy, but "the deep" of human misery?

As Advent then, and this glad Festival, come before Passion-tide and Easter, so have we need separately to meditate on this Day's Humility, before we contemplate the humiliation of the Passion. "Being in the Form of God," i.e. being essentially and truly God, "He emptied Himself, and took on Him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of man." This was His first humiliation, the earnest of that which was to follow; and then there followed that further humbling of Himself, that "He became obedient unto death, and," still beyond, "that, the death of the Cross." All is indeed one in God, in Whom all

things are One, in Whom are no parts, with Whom is no time, but Who exists One Substance in the Ever-Blessed Three, and Whose creature time is. In Him, Who is the Beginning and the End, the First and Last, beginning and end are one. The Mystery of the Incarnation issues in the Mystery of the Cross; the Humiliation of the Cross pre-supposes the Humiliation of the Incarnation. But we cannot behold them as one. Each hath its own unfathomable depth of Divine Condescension and Mercy, and although we must, in either, have the other present in the mind, (as this day combines in one the memory of His Birth, Resurrection,[k] the Gifts of His Spirit, and, in the Holy Eucharist, of His Precious Death), yet must we meditate habitually on each part, if we would behold the fulness of Either.

The intensity, then, of this day's blessed Mystery is, "God with us;" that, to retrace His Image upon us, He, Who is the Co-Eternal Image of the Father, took us into Himself, and stamped again His Likeness upon us, by taking the likeness of our sinfulness; that us, who were aforetime alienated from God, He made to be at one with God, by Himself becoming one of us, and giving us of His Oneness with the Father; us, who were a blot in the Creation of God, outcasts from His Sight, He has brought back into the harmony and order of His obedient creatures, uniting us to the Father in Himself; replacing our deadness by Himself, Who is Life; our darkness by Himself, Who is Light; our blindness by Himself, Who is Wisdom; our corruption by His Incorruption; our sinfulness by His Holiness; our emptiness by His Fulness, enlarging our finiteness to receive God, Who is Infinite.

Where shall be the bound or measure of His Mercies or of our praise? Our nature in itself the last, made, so to say, the Union between God and His creatures! For in Him Who is the Mediator between God and man, being Very God and Very Man, shall all things, "both which are in Heaven and which are in earth," be gathered together

[k] Preached when Christmas Day fell on the Lord's Day.

and summed[1] up in one; Angels and Saints shall together be in-oned, being together in-dwelt by the Ever-Blessed Trinity, in "the Church, which is His Body, the fulness of Him that filleth all in all."

And if He be such to us in deed and in the fulness of His purpose, if He have been thus "God with us," and purposeth that we should be thus "with God," if He have so taken our poor nature into Himself, that in Him it is In-Godded, Deitate,[m] and we, if we be truly His members, are parts of Him Who is One with God, how should He not be "with us" now in all things, if we be His? What but sin can hide His Face from us, in that it blinds our eyes that we see Him not? He, Whose "gifts and calling are without repentance," came not, (as at this time), to be with us, again wholly to leave us, that we should be without Him. He left us, but to be closer to us; left us in Bodily Presence, but to be present still more nearly in Spirit; not without us any longer, as Teacher, Guide, Comforter, but through that other Comforter, within us; withdrawn from our bodily sight, to fill our souls; no longer to be touched or handled by our hands, that His Spirit might be made manifest to our spirit, that we might touch Him with the hands of our heart, feed on Him with the cravings of our spirit, see Him with the eyes of our mind, be enlarged to receive Him, and, being expanded, be filled with Him, and be "one with Him and He with us."

How should He not be with us on our way, Who is Himself the Way? To us, as to the disciples, He shews Himself in different forms, but He is the Selfsame Saviour and Lord in all. Sorrow and joy, sickness or health, gladness of soul or heaviness of heart, the fulfilling of our desires or the taking away the desire of our eyes and that which we loved as our own souls, are but so many different forms of the same gracious Physician of our souls, binding us to

[1] Ἀνακεφαλαιώσασθαι. Eph. i. 10.

[m] "One Person and One Christ, Who is God Incarnate and Man Deitate, as Gregory Nazianzen saith, without mutation." Abp, Cranmer to Bp. Gardiner, p. 350. See also Petav. de Inc. &c.

Him by His blessings, or, by their withdrawal, teaching us to love Him Alone, our only Blessing. In all He is "God with us," that we may be with God. For this end "received He gifts as Man," that He might "give gifts to man,[n]" became, as Man, the Temple of the Incarnate Word, that we might become His Temple.

"All things," He saith, "that the Father hath are Mine: therefore, said I, that He shall take of Mine and shew it unto you." Not only is He our Mediator, as pleading the merits of His Precious Sacrifice with the Father, and receiving gifts for us, but His Human Nature is, as it were, the medium whereby the Fulness, and Holiness, and Immortality of God reacheth to us. "In Him dwelt all the fulness of the Godhead bodily." He, being the Word of God, was the Wisdom of God, and the Power of God, and the Righteousness of God, and the Glory, and Image, and Truth of God, Light of Light, and Life, "as the Father hath Life;[o]" and being this, and Very God, He took man into Himself, that, through that Human Nature which He had taken, His Gifts, and Fulness, and In-dwelling might extend through our whole nature. The Precious Ointment, which is the Holy Spirit, was received on the Head of our High Priest, that it might reach even unto us, and hallow us, if we be but the skirts of His garment, the mortality wherewith He clothed Himself, that He might give it His own Immortality and Life.

He is then "God with us" still. For, before He left us, He said, "Lo I am with you alway, even until the end of the world." He saith not "I will be," but, as God, "I Am;" unchangingly, unceasingly, by one everlasting ever-present Presence, because He is God. His Church is His Body, the token and channel of His Presence, possessing, as a whole, (as we daily repeat of her) His attribute of "Holiness," because she is (Scripture saith) His Body, indwelt by His Divinity; the Body whereof He is the Head, and, as such, living by His Life, moved by His Will, in-

[n] Ps. lxviii. 18; Eph. iv. 8. [o] S. John v. 26.

formed by His Spirit, imperishable, because as the Head forsaketh not the members, so neither He the Body He hath taken. She is one body, composed of the elder and more perfect Saints who are now perfected, and of us, as many of us as are yet in the Vine, and partake of His Holiness, and are living branches. In her hath He ever dwelt by His Spirit, manifesting Himself by divers tokens, according to His Wisdom or her needs and faithfulness, by miracles, by the endurance of Martyrs, the courage of Confessors, the perseverance of Saints, the holy prayers of the Devoted, the tears of Penitents, the self-denial and toils of Ascetics, the truth of Evangelists, the charity of the Bountiful, the humility of the Poor, the hope and sure trust of the Broken-hearted. She is one great mystery, consisting in Heaven of Angels and "just men, made perfect," and here below of such as being imperfect, are yet in the course of being perfected, and whom she is daily receiving into herself, under Him her Head, that they may, in Him, be perfected.

And in her He is yet "God with us" in His Sacraments; by the one whereof, we are made members of Himself; taken out of our state of nature and the mere lineage of Adam, and made a part of that mystical Body, which doth as truly belong to Him, as the Body which He, as on this day, took; yea, to form Which was His gracious purpose in taking that Body. "He[p] giveth to the water of Baptism," it was said of old, "the same power which He gave His Mother,"—to bear sons of God, by adoption, as He is, by Nature, "the Son of God." And as, in the one Sacrament, He made us members of His mystical Body, invisibly, so doth He, in the other, give us invisibly His Body which was broken, and His Blood which was shed for us, that we, receiving Him, may be partakers of Him, have Him to dwell within

[p] S. Leo Serm. 5, de Nat. Dom. c. 5. "He was made man of our race, that we might be capable of being partakers of His Divine Nature. That new original which He took in the Virgin's womb, He placed in the Fountain of Baptism. He gave to the water what He gave to His Mother. For the Power of the Highest and the Overshadowing of the Holy Ghost, which caused Mary to bring forth the Saviour, the Same causeth the water to regenerate the believer."

us, as He cometh to us; feeding on Him, may live by Him, and in Him, and to Him, and He in us; that we, partaking of His Body, may be members of His Body, of His Flesh and of His Bones,[q]" yea, as Scripture says, may be "partakers of His Divine Nature." And He "with us," one with us through His Manhood, as One with the Father, by His Godhead, yet, being One Christ, is to us and in us "Wisdom, and Righteousness, and Sanctification, and Redemption," and "Peace," and "Salvation."

And being Man "with us," how, if our eyes were not "holden" and our hearts dull, might we not, in all the actions of life, see Him by our side join Himself to us, and hear His words, and "our hearts burn within us!" For all which we are, except sin, He became, that He might sanctify to us all our actions, and us in them. Whatever our age, such hath His been; infancy,[r] childhood, opening youth, full age; all He took on Him, that He might hallow us in all; yea, and old age, and weakness too He anticipated, through suffering.[s] He hungered and thirsted, was weary, or ate and drank, sat down on the well, slept and was refreshed, (although perhaps more often watching), "wept", and "rejoiced in spirit," was grieved, amazed, troubled in Himself, groaned, was "sorrowful even unto death," not only to set before us the great Mystery of this Day, that the Word indeed became Flesh, that He was indeed Man, soul and

[q] Eph. v. 30.

[r] "He destroyed not in Himself the law of human nature, but sanctified every age, by the likeness which it had to Himself. For He came to save all; all who, through Him, are re-born to God, infants and little ones, and boys, and young men, and elders So then He came in every age; being to infants made an Infant, sanctifying infants; in little ones a Little One, sanctifying those who are of this age, being also made to them an example of piety, righteousness, and subjection; in young men, a Young Man, becoming an Example to young men, and sanctifying them to the Lord. So also an Elder in elders, that He may be a perfect Master in all, not in the teaching of the truth only, but in age also, at the same time both sanctifying elders, and Himself also becoming an example to them; and thence, at last, coming even to death, that He might be the 'First-Begotten of the dead,' 'having in all things the pre-eminence,' the 'Prince of Life, before all and preceding all.'" S. Iren. 2. 22. 4.

[s] "Thou art not yet fifty years old," it was said to Him, (S. John viii. 57), before His last sufferings, as if His Human Form seemed already worn beyond that of other men.

body, such as we, (which also, for its very condescension's sake, has been, to high-minded men, hard to believe), but that He might infuse into these acts His own Holiness.

How might we, in the commands of parents, hear that which He obeyed; in the reproof of elders, His voice (as it indeed is), hear Him in His ministers; submit to authority with Him; bear revilings with Him; be poor with Him; suffer cold, or hunger, or pain, or bereavement, or friendlessness, with Him; with Him, by resigning, in early years, our own will, learn, what He ever had, to have no will but His Father's! And if we suffered, and fasted, and mourned, and wept with Him, and, much more, if we strove, in His strength, to keep that Innocency, which was His, and which again, in Baptism, He gave us; then we might rejoice with Him, hold with Him this our Christmas Festival, feast with Him, lie down to rest in Him, awake in Him, as the emblem of our rising in Him, see Him "in all fair things around." For all which we see hath its uses or beauties from Him. He is our Corn and Wine, and His Spirit is our Oil; He our Sun of Righteousness, or our Shadow in heat; the Shower on our parched ground; the Bow in the cloud; in Him are we washed; in Him clothed; He is our Robe of Righteousness, and Immortality, He is our Home and our sure Abiding-place; and all things in this earth may speak of Him, for we dwell in a redeemed world, which His Sacred Footsteps have trod and sanctified; and it too, we may think, shall not utterly cease to be, but be "changed,[t]" purified by fire into "a new earth, wherein dwelleth Righteousness;" when the creature also shall "be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the sons of God."

Only if we would truly see Him, we must seek to have the mirror of our hearts cleansed, that it may receive His glorious Image. "The pure in heart," He hath promised, "shall see Him." Of them who love Him and keep His words, He saith "My Father will love him, and We will come unto him, and make Our abode with him." Love is

[t] Ps. cii. 26.

the eye whereby the spirit sees God. Disputing about holy things, (as is now too frequent), but blinds us. If we love and as we love, we shall see and shall receive. While the world jangles, our Lord comes secretly to us, if we, with pure hearts, draw nigh to Him. The Mysteries of Faith must needs be an offence to the wisdom of the world, but we, who truly believe and meditate on the Mystery of the Incarnation, shall not stumble at any other mystery, nor wonder that He chose humble means, the elements of this world, whereby to convey His Presence, when He, the Immortal, Invisible, of the Substance of the Father, took Flesh of our substance, in the Virgin's womb. His Glory is invisible still to the "wise and prudent" of this world, and "revealed unto babes."

But if we would see Him in His Sacraments, we must see Him also, wherever He has declared Himself to be, and especially in His poor. In them also He is "with us" still. And so our Church has united mercy to His poor with the Sacrament of His Body and Blood, and bade us, ere we approach to receive Him, to remember Him in His poor, that so, "loving much," we, who are otherwise unworthy, may be "much forgiven," we, "considering[u]" Him in His "poor and needy," may be permitted to behold Him; and for Him parting with our earthly substance, may be partakers of His Heavenly. Real love to Christ must issue in love to all who are Christ's, and real love to Christ's poor must issue in self-denying acts of love towards them. Casual alms'-giving is not Christian charity. Rather, seeing Christ in the poor, the sick, the hungry, the thirsty, the naked, we must, if we can, by ourselves, if not, by others, seek them out, as we would seek Christ, looking for a blessing from it, far greater than any they can gain from our alms. It was promised of old time, as a blessing, "the poor[x] shall never cease out of the land," and now we know the mercy of this mysterious blessing, for they are the Presence of our Lord. "The poor," He saith, "ye have always with you,

[u] Ps. xli. 1.

[x] Deut. xv. 11.

but Me ye have not always," not in bodily Presence, but in His poor, whom we shall ever have.

The poor of Christ are the Church's special treasure, as the Gospel is their special property, the Church the home of the homeless, the mother of the fatherless. The poor are the wealth, the dowry of the Church; they have a sacred character about them; they bring a blessing with them; for they are what Christ for our sake made Himself. Such as them did He call around Him; such as they, whether by God's outward appointment, or by His Spirit directing men's choice, the "poor, rich in faith," have been the converters of the world; and we, my brethren, if we are wise, must seek to be like them, to empty ourselves, at least, of our abundance; to empty ourselves, rather, of our self-conceit, our notions of station, our costliness of dress, our jewelry, our luxuries, our self-love, even as He, on this day, emptied Himself of the glory which He had with the Father, the Brightness of His Majesty, the worship of the Hosts of Heaven, and made Himself poor, to make us rich, and to the truly poor He hath promised the Kingdom of Heaven; the hungry He will fill, but those in themselves rich, He will send empty away. Year by year there is more need; the poor are multiplying upon us, and distress on them; gigantic needs require gigantic efforts; in these our towns, our Church is losing its best blessing, that of being the Church of the poor; we know not too often of their existence; our fair houses are like painted sepulchres, hiding, by a goodly outside, from our own sight, the misery, and hunger, and cold, and nakedness, which we love not to look upon, but which will rise in judgment against our nation, if we heed it not. Realize we that they are Christ's, yea, that we approach to Christ in them, feed Him, visit Him, clothe Him, attend on Him, and we shall feel (as Saints, even of the noble of this world, have felt) that it is a high honour to us to be admitted to them. Such as can, would gladly devote their lives to them. We all should treat their needs with reverence, not relieving them coldly, and as a form, but humble ourselves in heart before their patient suffering; welcome the inter-

course with them, as bringing us nearer unto Christ. In them He comes to us, in them we visit Him; in them we may find Him; He in them and for them intercedes for us with the Father; in them He Who gave them to us, the means and the hearts to relieve them, will receive our gifts; He, before men and Angels, shall acknowledge as done to Him, what, for His sake, we did to them.

Oh seek we then, at least for ourselves, one by one, while He may be found, our Lord Who, on this day, sought us, in all ways we can. Seek we Him, in the contemplation of His mysterious mercy; love we to be alone with Him, to leave the world, at intervals at least, to behold Him; seek we Him, in His House, whenever two or three may be gathered there; seek we Him, in the temples of our own hearts, where He has promised to dwell; seek we Him, with reverence and awe, in His Sacraments, where He has promised to give us His Body and Blood; seek we Him humbly, in His poor, as the source of true riches to us; and on this day let us, who hope to receive Him, return to Him more largely the alms to be offered to Him, for His use in His poor. So may we hope, in all things seeking Him, at length to find Him, yea to be found of Him, and in Him, and being found in Him, to be accepted for His mercy's sake, and He for ever be "God with us," and "we for ever be with the Lord;" loving Him for His mercy, loving Him that He gave us that love, loving Him with everlasting love, and filled and satisfied with His love, Who emptied Himself, that He might give us of His fulness, became the Son of Man, that we might be sons of God.

SERMON V.

THE INCARNATION, A LESSON OF HUMILITY.

CHRISTMAS.

PHIL. II. 5—7.

"*Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus, Who, being in the Form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God, but made Himself of no reputation, and took upon Him the form of a servant.*"

"HE emptied Himself." Such is the full force of the amazing word,[a] for which we read "He made Himself of no reputation." So much does God's Holy Word often contain in one word, partaking not of our infirmity of language, but of His Infinity. "He emptied Himself." He, the Eternal Son of the Eternal Father, God of God, Light of Light, Co-equal with the Father, Who hath neither beginning nor end, but is Himself "the Beginning and the End, the First and the Last," Uncreate, and the Creator, Infinite, Almighty, dwelling Ever-blessed in the Infinite Love of the Father, worshipped by Cherubim and Seraphim, and all the Host of Heaven and the Heaven of Heavens, became what He was not, Flesh; and, since what He was, God, He could not cease to be, yet He was as though He were It not. What He had not been, He became; and that

[a] Ἐκένωσε

so as to seem not to be what He was. He became what He was not! Aweful words to use; "God became," as though the Unchangeable could change. Yet He says, "The Word, Who was God, became Flesh;" became, not by ceasing to be what He was, but by taking into Himself what He was not; by veiling Himself under that Flesh which He united for ever with Himself. "He emptied Himself." He the Creator, passed by the Heavenly Host, delivered not them, by taking their nature, but came down to us, who were "lower than the Angels," last in order of His rational creation, and became as one of us. All His Attributes He veiled and hid; His Infinity, to abide, like other unborn babes, within the Virgin's womb; His Eternity, to receive birth in time, younger than His creatures; His Unchangeableness, to grow in stature, and (as it would seem) for His earthly Form to decay, and be worn by His sufferings; His Wisdom, "for [b] our sake and among us to be ignorant, as Man," "of that which, as Lord, He knew;" His Self-sufficingness, that He, Who had all things, became as though He had nothing. He forewent not things without Him only; He forewent Himself. He, the Creator, not only made Himself to need the creatures which He had formed, and was without them—He was hungry, and thirsty, and wearied, but even in the things which He wrought, He depended not alone on the Godhead within Him, but on the Father. His Works were not His own works, but His Father's. He came to do not His own Will, but His Father's, although He and the Father were One, and He was that Will. "My meat is to do the will of Him that sent Me, and to finish His work." He prayed, and praying was heard, though Himself was God. He was strengthened, as Man, by the Angel whom, as God, He created. Yea, still more did He forego His power, in that not only what He wrought, He wrought by the power of the Father, but He was content to seem to effect nothing. He appeared but to prepare His own way. His visible ministry was scarcely different

[b] S. Cyril. Al. Thes. p. 221, and S. Athanas. c. Arian. iii. 28, see note p. 464, f. 466, g. 684, k. Oxf. Tr.

from that of His forerunner; He took up the words of His servant "Repent, for the Kingdom of Heaven is at hand:" He baptized not to Himself,[c] Whom He hid. He "came not in His own Name." He was content, while on earth, not to "see the travail of His own soul." He gave not the Spirit. "I, if I be lifted up, from the earth, shall draw all men unto Me." "Greater works," saith He to His disciples, "than these shall he do that believeth on Me, because I go to the Father.[d]" His visible Presence was but a preparation for His invisible. His Presence was weak, and despised, and rejected; His Absence was with power. He sowed, for His servants to reap. He laid the foundation, even Himself; but deep, hidden, invisible, whereon His servants were to build.

Again, how must He have "emptied Himself" of His Majesty, Who, when, "with one rough word," He could have destroyed the ungodly, and "with the Breath of His Mouth" have (as He shall hereafter) "slain the wicked," was Himself sold into their hands, for the price of a bond-slave. He "hid not His Face from shame and spitting," before Whom Angels veil their faces. Man discerned nothing to awe him from buffeting that Countenance before which the wicked shall melt away; the Judge of Heaven and Earth stood before wicked judges, and they beheld neither His innocence nor their own guilt. They condemned Him because He owned that He was what He was, God. He "emptied Himself" of His Immortality, and the Immortal died. He became subject to death, the penalty of sin. He was hidden not only from men but from evil spirits, who see what lies below, in the heart, more than man; and thus the deceiver was strongly deceived, himself to destroy his own power, and set his captives free. The princes of this world (the rulers of darkness) discerned Him not, and so "crucified the Lord of glory.[e]" "God," it has been said,[f] "was crucified and died in that Human

[c] See Tert. de Bapt. c. 11. p. 269 Oxf. Tr. [d] S. John xiv. 12. [e] 1 Cor. ii. 8.
[f] Vigil. c. Eutych, L. iv. col. 512. See Petav. de Inc. iv. 15. S. Ath. c. Arian. i. 13 p. 267, Oxf. Tr. and p. 444, note i. &c.

Nature which, from Its participation in the united Word, calleth also for the Name of God."

But what (if we may speak reverently of these mysteries), seems yet more amazing, He was content to veil even that, in Himself, wherein, so to say, God is most God, the Glory of the Divinity, His Holy Being, whereby He hateth all iniquity. He, Who is "the Truth," was contented to be called "that deceiver;" they said of Him, "Nay, but He deceiveth the people." He hid His Holiness, so that His apostate angel shrank not from approaching Him, to tempt Him. He came in the likeness of sinful flesh, so that His fallen creature thought that He might become as himself. He veiled the very humility wherewith He humbled Himself to be obedient, so that Satan thought that He might be tempted through pride. He was content to be thought able to covet the creatures which He had made, and, like us, to prefer them to the Father; yea, and the very lowest of the creatures, which even man can despise. They called Him "a gluttonous man, and a winebibber." "We know," say they, "that this man is a sinner." They reproached Him for disobedience to the Father, and breaking the law which He gave. So wholly was He made like unto us, in all things, sin only excepted, that man could not discern that He, the Holy God, was not (shocking to say) unholy man.

It surpasses all thought, it amazes, it confounds, to think of God becoming man; the Infinite enshrined within the finite, the Lord of all blended[g] with His servant, the Creator with His creature! It is a depth of mystery unsearchable. We must shrink with awe when we pronounce it Of old they fell down and worshipped, when, in our Creed, they uttered it—"God was made Man." It was an unimaginable condescension for God to create. From Eternity, *in* Eternity, (since it had no beginning), He was Ever-blessed, Love loving Love in the Holy Spirit, Who is the Bond of Love and Unity. He was, in

[g] i. e. closely united, yet without "confusion of substance." See on Tertull. Apol. p. 48, note h. Oxf. Tr.

Himself, All-perfect. He needed nothing, changed not. And yet, in that He created, He did a new thing, and formed those who needed Him, as though *He* needed them. He formed them to serve Him Who needed them not, and He accepted their service. It was much, as Scripture saith, to "humble Himself to behold the things which are in Heaven and earth." But that He, Who was Perfect in Himself, should take into Himself something without Him; that He, Who is All in all, should add something to Himself; that He Who is a Spirit, should take into Himself that which was material; in a word, that God (if we realize to ourselves what that word GOD is) should take into Himself what is not GOD; one must stand speechless with awe at so amazing a mystery. How must we be amazed and scarce believe for joy, to think that that which He so took was man, ourselves, our fallen, sinful, in Him Alone unsinful, unsinning nature.

It had been past belief, were it not more past belief that what He declares should not be true, that God should take the manhood into God, had it been all perfection, had He even in it appeared in His Own Glory, as now He is, or as He shall be when He again appeareth. But Scripture veils even this truth, like Himself, in lowliness. It says, "the Word became Flesh," that is, God Man. It saith not even "became Man," but "became Flesh." It calls[h] that which He took for us, our human nature, from that which in us is the lowest, our "flesh." His Humility held back from nothing, not even our fallen[i] flesh, which we had so defiled, in Him Alone "without desire of sin." He became Man, in all his infirmity, all the infirmities brought upon him by sin, only not sin itself. He so became man, that the tears which man hides for shame, He wept, wept as one who suffered, and was, as it were, mastered by suffering, as though He could not but weep. There burst from His Body "sweat, as it were great drops of blood," the sign of weakness, the very penalty of Adam's sin. And

[h] See S. Greg. Naz. and S. Aug. in Petav. de Inc. 4. 2. 8.
[i] See S. Ath. c. Ar. i. 11, and p. 241. h. Oxf. Tr.

at this time what became He? What even man pities, as helpless; what is the very type of helplessness; every member powerless, moved at will, yet unable to move itself; helpless to utter even its own wants and helplessness. One had not dared so to speak of His Ineffable Humility, lest we, so little humble, should not be able with reverence so to think on His Humility, had they not of old[k], in more reverent days, so spoken. But now we would repeat it, and, with Sarah, laugh with wondering joy. "For us" men "a Child was born;" the Lord of Hosts was born a Child; the Everlasting God, Who was before all times, and "by Whom are all things" and all times, was born in time. He became Man, Who created man. He Who guides the stars in their courses, lay motionless. He Who gives speech to men and Angels, the Word, in Whom is all utterance and all knowledge, lay speechless, so that, in the language of prophecy, He could not yet "say My Father, My Mother." He was born of the mother whom He had created for Himself; He was borne on the hands which He had formed; He, as Scripture[l] says, received infantine nourishment at her breasts, which He filled; He, if in this too He were like other infants, gave witness, by His Tears,[m] that He was born to suffer for us, as we for ourselves. "So deeply had human pride sunk us," says an ancient Bishop,[n] "that nothing but Divine Humility could raise us."

The Divine Words speak of Him as at once Perfect God, and Perfect Man. He was both wholly. Nothing was lacking to His Perfection, as God; nothing of man's infirmities,[o] which flow from sin, though without touch of sin, was lacking that He should be Perfect Man. Our imperfect

[k] See S. Aug. Serm. 84, sqq. and S. Leo, Serm. 21, sqq. Nat. Dom.

[l] Ps. xxii. 9.

[m] "He is wrapped in swaddling clothes, as other children; He weepeth as others. His tears proclaim, His swaddling clothes proclaim, that man's wounds are now washed and wiped clean." S. Bern. in Nat. Dom. init.

[n] S. Aug. Serm. 188, in Nat. Dom. 5. § 3.

[o] All our infirmities, which come from sin, He took, without participation with sin." S. Leo Serm. 63, (de Pass. Dom. 12.) c. 4.

nature He took perfectly. He *was* in the "Form of God;" He took upon Himself "the form of a servant." "In the Form of God," that is, in the very Essence of God; "in the form of man," that is, in the essence of man. Before, He was in that only, whereby God is what HE IS, "the Form of God," the fulness of Divinity. "He emptied Himself," and took the fulness of human nature, all which maketh *it* what *it* is. He, the Only Begotten, in all things Equal to the Father, Equal in Glory, Majesty, Eternity, took the form of a servant, became the Brother of those who were under the yoke of servitude. To Him, Who was Equal with God, it became, in prophecy, a title of honour that He was the Servant of God;[p] He, in Whom the Father was ever well-pleased, as the Son, now became the Chosen "Servant," in Whom His Soul delighted.[q]

And as was His Birth, such was His Life. We, being poor, having the intrinsic poverty of our sinful wretchedness, poor in His Holy Spirit, think it much if we have not all we long for; He, "being rich," in the love of the Co-Equal Trinity, in the Bosom of the Father, emptied Himself of His Riches, and, for our sakes, "became poor." We long to be and to have what we are not and have not; He forewent what He was and had. We long to be first; He became last, even man; and among men, "as he that serveth.[r]" We, deserving contempt, wish to be esteemed, are impatient of reproach; He, Who Alone hath glory, was content to be despised by His creature, man; yea "to be a worm and no man, a very scorn of men, and an outcast of the people," an outcast of the very outcasts; "the very abjects gathered themselves together against Me.[s]" "We," says the same holy Bishop,[t] "being men, wished to be God—to be lost; He, being God, willed to be Man, to find that which was lost."

And not only in Birth, in Life, in Death, but now also in His Glory, He is content to be hidden still. So did He veil His Majesty, that because, as Man, He confessed,

[p] Is. xlix. 6; Zech. iii. 8. [q] Is. xlii. 1. [r] S. Luke xxii. 4.
[s] Ps. xxxv. 15. [t] S. Aug. l. c.

"My Father is greater than I," some whom He came to redeem will not believe in Him; others believe not in Him as He is. The world still knoweth Him not, even as then "it knew Him not." He still cometh to His own, "and His own (His purchased ones) receive Him not." He still endures "the blasphemy of the multitude," is still neglected and trampled upon in His poor, despised and profaned in His Sacraments, hated in His servants, and in His body, the Church; alas! that we must say it, scoffed at by the infidel; and, worst of all, how often have they who own Him been ashamed to confess Him before men, ashamed of Him, their Saviour and their God! He is still content to be unknown to the wise and prudent in their own conceits, to be despised in Lazarus, and, as at this time, to receive the hidden worship of those whom the world knows nothing of, the poor, the desolate, the humble, the mourner, the broken-hearted, the stranger.

And all this for us, ungrateful! "This," says an ancient father,[u] "is the glory of Christ, that in His Body He took the state of servitude, that He might give liberty to all; He bore our sins that He might take away the sin of the world; He was made a servant, sin, a curse, that thou mightest cease to be the servant of sin; that He might absolve thee from the curse of the Divine sentence." He became humble that He might cure our pride.

My brethren, we must not, on this our day of rejoicing, content ourselves with even holy feelings and thankfulness; we must not even think that we joy in the Lord, unless we seek to become like the Lord. They only can joy in Him who are like Him; man, when humbled, in a Humble God.

This is the special Festival of humility, as of joy, a lowly joy, a joy of the lowly. Our Lord, from the manger, where, for our sakes, He deigned to lie, preacheth to us humility. This was the beginning and end of His teaching. He taught it in action now, by His Birth; He taught it in all His Life and Sufferings; He summed up His teaching in this, a

[u] S. Ambr. Ep. 46. § 12, 13.

little before those Sufferings, when He washed His disciples' feet, and said "know ye what I have done to you? If I, your Lord and Master, have washed your feet, ye ought also to wash one another's feet. I have given you an example that ye should do as I have done to you. If ye know these things, happy are ye if ye do them." He not merely, as in the days of His flesh, setteth before us, His disciples, a little child, and bids us become like it, if we would "enter into the Kingdom of Heaven;" He has Himself become that little Child. Year by year He sets Himself before us, a little Child, in great humility, and bids us become like Him, that when He appears again, in His glorious Majesty, we may again be made like Him. Year by year, through His Holy Nativity, He calleth us to behold Him, and cryeth, by His very speechless Infancy, "Take My yoke upon you and learn of Me, for I am meek and lowly of heart, and ye shall find rest unto your souls." "The Master," says a holy father,[x] "the Son of God, the Wisdom of God, through Whom all things were made, preacheth. He calleth the human race, and saith, 'Learn of Me.' What? 'how I created Heaven and earth? how all things were in Me before they were?' No; but 'I am meek and lowly of heart.'" The mysteries of His Godhead are the contemplation of eternity for those who shall see God; now He would teach us what for us He became, the Mystery of His Humility in His Incarnation. God Incarnate preaches humility to His creature.

For this is the foundation of the whole building of Christian virtues; or rather, thus alone can we reach that Foundation, Whereon Alone we can build securely. The heathen had semblances or images of well nigh every virtue. He had many excellencies, here and there, which put Christians to shame. Wretchedly corrupt as life was upon the whole, still not individuals only, but even nations, had great single virtues. The heathen had self-devotion, contentment, contempt of the world without him, and of the flesh; he had fortitude,

[x] S. Aug. Serm. 117, de verb. Ev. Joh. § 17. See more at length Serm. 67, p. 501. Oxf. Tr.

endurance, self-denial, abstemiousness, temperance, chastity, even a sort of reverence for God Whom he knew not; but he had not humility. The first sin, the wish to be as God, pride, spoiled them all. Man, in his natural state, claims, as his own, what is God's; and so he displeases God, Whom he robs of His Honour. And so the first beginning of Christian virtues is to lay aside pride. It is to own that we have nothing, that so we may receive all and hold all of God; and when, as being in Christ and partaking of His Riches, we begin to have, still to own that, of our own, we have nothing. It is the only hope of our sinful selves to be freed from what is our own, and have what is not our own, but His. Our own fruits were but sin; our inheritance, the wages of sin, death. What we have is His Gift; what we hope for, is still His Gift; our price, His Blood; ourselves, His Purchase; our life, His within us; our sanctification, Himself; our works, His Grace, preventing, working, finishing; our hope, His pardoning Mercy, accepting what He gave, filling up what we lack, "forgiving all our iniquities, healing" at length and for ever "all our infirmities, redeeming our life from destruction, crowning" His Redeemed, as His Own Gift still, "with mercy and loving-kindness," and filling our emptiness with His Endless Good.

But not only in general or towards Him, have we need of humility. It enters in detail into each Christian grace, so that it has been said[y] "well-nigh the whole substance of the Christian discipline is humility." Every mountain of human pride must be brought low, to prepare the Lord's way; and so shall the lowly valley be exalted. Without humility, there can be no resignation, since humility alone knows it's sufferings and sorrows to be less than it deserves; no contentment, for humility alone knows that it has more blessings than it deserves; no peace, for contention cometh of want of humility; no kindness, for pride envieth; and this St. Paul assigns as the very reason why "love envieth not," that it "is not puffed up" i. e. is humble. How shall there,

[y] S. Aug. Serm. 351. de Pænit. S. 1, § 4.

without it, be any Christian grace, since all are the Fruits of God's Holy Spirit, as He "resisteth the proud and giveth grace unto the lowly?" "He dwelleth in the humble and contrite heart." If love be the summit of all virtue, humility is the foundation. He humbled Himself because He loved us; we must be humble in order to love Him; for to such only will He impart His Love. "The Publican would not so much as lift up his eyes to Heaven," and God was more pleased with the confession of sins in the sinner, than in the recounting of the virtues of the righteous. The Canaanitish woman was content with the portion of the dogs, and she had "the children's bread." The gate of life is low as well as narrow. Through the lowly portal of repentance, are we brought into the Church; and humble as little children must we again become, if we would enter the everlasting gates.

Well indeed may the Christian be ashamed not to be humble, for whom God became humble; to be exalted where his Master was abased; to be had in honour where He was despised; to be rich where He was poor; to be waited upon, where He "came not to be ministered to but to minister." Yea, but that it must be so, well may we, if we have any humility, be ashamed to be waited on, honoured, served, by those who are perhaps higher in God's Favour, and who will one day behold His Presence nearer than we, who now are first. Well will it be for us if, while we accept such services, we be ashamed to receive them, as unworthy of them, and in that shame learn the humility, which they who render them learn by being the last.

We may not then contemplate a humble Saviour without longing ourselves to be humble. If on this Day, thou hast some thoughts of thankfulness for the great Humility of thy Lord, follow it; so shalt thou cherish them. Humbled thyself, thou shalt love thy Humble Saviour. Thoughts are wasted, unless turned into action. Seek in daily action to prefer others to thyself; give to others, when thou mayest, the first place, and take the last; be glad when others are praised and thou passed over; others are listened to and thou

disregarded; forget thy good deeds and remember thy sins; consider what is good in thy neighbour, what is evil in thyself; amid what disadvantages they are what they are, how fenced around and with what supplies of grace we are but what we are. If thou must outwardly be honoured and served, inwardly abase thyself as unworthy; if praised, call quick to mind the ill thou knowest of thyself and others know not of; be very jealous not to seek praise, not to say any thing with a view to obtain praise, or to be thought well of; be not over-anxious to clear thyself from blame; all blame is deserved, if not at man's hand, yet at God's; in undeserved blame see, (as has been said by a good Bishop of our Church), what but for God's Grace, thou wouldest even now be; in praise, what by God's Grace we should have been, but, through our sin, are not; confess habitually to God the sins of thy youth, thy many short-comings, thy daily infirmities; consider with thyself what God is, and what thou; He, how pure! thou, in thyself nothing; of thyself but sin; pray to see thy sins as God seeth them; so, striking "root[z] downwards" in humility, shalt thou bear "fruit upwards" unto God; so, laying a deep foundation, shall thy house remain. The tree falls with any gust of wind when the root is near the surface; the house which has a shallow foundation, is soon shaken. High and wide as the noblest trees spread, so deep and wide their roots are sunk below;[a] the more majestic and nobler a pile of building, the deeper its foundation; their height is but an earnest of their lowliness; you see their height, their lowliness is hidden; the use of sinking thus deep is not plain to sight, yet were they not thus lowly, they could not be thus lofty. Dig deep then the foundation of humility, so only mayest thou hope to reach the height of charity; for by humility alone canst thou reach that Rock, which shall not be shaken, that is Christ. Founded by humility on that Rock, the storms of the world shall not shake thee, the torrent of evil custom shall not bear thee away, the empty winds of

[z] See S. Aug. Serm. 69, (19 Oxf. Tr.)

[a] Virg. Georg. ii. 292. sqq.

vanity shall not cast thee down. Founded deep on that Rock, thou mayest build day by day that tower whose top shall reach unto Heaven, to the very Presence of God, the sight of God, and shalt be able to finish it; for He shall raise thee thither, Who for thy sake abased Himself to us.

God is reached, not by lifting up ourselves, but by casting down ourselves; we cannot approach Him, but He cometh nigh to us, even to those who are cast down. Be humble with Him, Who humbled Himself for thee, and He with Himself shall exalt thee. Be empty of thyself and He with Himself shall fill thee. The sins which thou in humility rememberest, God for Christ's sake will forget; the good deeds which in humility thou forgettest, He for Christ's sake will accept; and when thou acknowledgest their worthlessness, He will give them a worth which of themselves they could not have. He hath respect unto the lowly. Though we have nothing else in us worthy of His gracious regard, yet, if we be lowly, He will deign to look upon us. He will, herein at least, see in us the likeness of His Son; and while we humble ourselves to Hell where we deserve to be, He will raise us up, whither we deserve not, to Heaven.

But let us beware lest we deceive ourselves. What would be humility in others, may be pride in us. We know not mostly, are but learning feebly what deep humility we need. We have learnt nothing, until we have learnt to be last of all, to take the lowest place, and believe that it is the fittest place for us; to compare ourselves with none, except to abase ourselves; to see God in all besides, in ourselves, our own hideousness and deformity and the scars of our manifold sins; to count ourselves unworthy to be last in that glorious company, which shall see His Blissful Countenance for ever, and willing to be placed by Him not first, but last. Sad as it is, this to most of us will be nearer the truth. For many "that are first shall be last, and the last first." They whom the world despises, they whom alas! too many of us in the pride of our hearts, our station, our intellect, once little accounted of, shall be among the nearest friends of the Bridegroom in the Heavenly Halls. The weak in intellect but strong in love,

the ignorant of all knowledge except the knowledge of God, the poor in all things outward, but rich in "the ornament of a meek and quiet spirit," shall by their love be borne aloft, shall for their true poverty receive the kingdom of Heaven, as being like Him Whose it is, and Who for us became poor; they shall for their true humility be exalted, as having "the mind of Christ" "Who emptied Himself, and became obedient to death, and that the Death of the Cross; wherefore God hath highly exalted Him, and given Him a Name above every name." For us, who are in this Day exalted, well will it be, if in that Day, we be but least, lowest, last, where to be least and last is above all our deserts, as much as Heaven is above Hell.

Cling then fast to humility, shrink from station, advancement, honour, praise, prosperity, if thou mayest, and whatever else may hinder it. If thou must have any of these, humble thyself yet more in private. Take we gladly shame, reproach, abasement, whatever may teach us what we are. And on this Day seek we as we may the mind of little children, unlearn ourselves and our self-esteem; even in the outward joys which any may have, prefer one another as esteeming others better than ourselves. Study in them the Mind of Christ Jesus, that if we cannot be like them in innocence, we may at least in lowliness, and for His sake Who, as on this Day, deigned to become for us a little Child, bearing in us some shadow of His Humility, inwrought by Him, we may by Him be made partakers of the Reality of His Glory. To Whom with the Father and the Holy Ghost be all Glory, &c.

SERMON VI.

CHARACTERS OF CHRISTIAN REBUKES.

FEAST OF ST. STEPHEN.

Acts vi. 15.

"*And all that sat in the council, looking steadfastly on him, saw his face as it had been the face of an Angel.*

He Who humbled Himself, for our sakes, to become Man, humbles Himself still to behold man, to dwell in man, to be honoured in man. And so the Church has, in honour of His Coming in great Humility, gathered around it three Festivals of those whom He sanctified, instances of His Mercy, specimens of that noble army, which, as time goes on, He is enrolling, who, with His Holy Angels, serve Him here, and who, with all the Heavenly Hosts, shall praise Him for ever. They are (it has long been noticed) ensamples of different sorts of Martyrs; the blessed Saint of to-day, the first-fruits of that noble Army, an actual and willing martyr: to-morrow St. John, a willing but not an actual martyr, preserved, like Daniel's three companions, by His Saviour's Might, stopping the violence of fire, and in the cauldron of boiling oil, a Fence around him, keeping him unconsumed, so that his actual martrydom was rather, not to die, not "to be dissolved," and be with His Master Whom he loved, but year after year, in suffering expectation await

His Coming: the third, the Holy Innocents, earliest crowned, without their deserts, their will, or any tried service. Each of these, severally, was the fruit of His varied Grace; and all, together, set before us the manifold Mercies and depth of Wisdom in God, Whose "ways are not as our ways." In them we see how He dispenseth or withholdeth His Gifts, hasteneth His Work or delayeth it, early delivereth from this evil world, or preserveth His own unto the end in it, not according to any rules of wisdom which we could see, nor according to our notions of merit or attainment, but according to His Own Sovereign Will and Wisdom, that all may ascribe all honour and might to Him, commit all to Him, acknowledge "both riches and honour" (all we are endowed with, and His Grace crowning His Grace in their holy use) "come of Thee, and Thou reignest over all, and in Thine Hand is Power and Might; and in Thine Hand it is to make great, and to give strength to all. Now, therefore, our God, we thank Thee and praise Thy Glorious Name." Who would have thought that infants would have been the first to "glorify God by their deaths," and that out of their speechless frames He would have "perfected praise?" Or, that of His willing Martyrs, one in the inferior office of Deacon, should have been the first against whom the rage of the enemy would have been maddened? Or that he, the Disciple whom Jesus loved, would have been kept the last from gazing on that Glorious Face Which he so loved, from that Blessed Embrace in the Everlasting Arms, for which he so longed, from reposing in that Bosom whereon, even on earth, he lay, and drank in His Wisdom and His Love? Who would not have thought that he, so early loving, would have been early perfected; he, so early ripened, would have been gathered early into the garner of the Lord?

Yet more, in these two Saints there is a likeness of natural character, and yet how differently are they dealt with, how differently perfected? Both were naturally full of burning zeal. Of St. John we know that our Lord entitled him "son of thunder;" as, through his early temper, proclaiming rather the Terror and Majesty of the Wrath of God than

His Love. In St. Stephen every word and action breathes a Divine might and holy awe, bearing down before him the opposition of man's rebellion. But of these, the one was moulded to proclaim the Lord, as the vessel of His Inspiration, not in the whirlwind, but in the "still small voice" of Love; the other equally speaking, "as moved by the Holy Ghost," was yet taught so to speak, as to draw down quickly the wrath of the adversary, and end at once his burning course, "resisting unto blood," even to the shedding of his own. Yet St. John[a] too could reprove terribly, as in the rebuke of the heretic who denied his Lord, "acknowledging" him as "the first-born of Satan;" and to St. Stephen it was vouchsafed to take upon his dying lips, his Master's prayer of tender self-forgetting love, for those who slew him. And through that Lord, by Whose Spirit and in Whose Name he prayed, the prayer was heard, and, in his stead, was raised up that "chosen vessel" St. Paul, to carry on the message of mercy, whose early preacher he aided to cut off. By both, again, God would teach us, not to choose for ourselves or for others, "what shall this man do?" but to yield ourselves to do or to suffer, that whereto we are each appointed. He Who perfects His instruments in different ways, would, by that very difference, teach them that their course, from first to last, is not of their own wisdom, but by His Guidance. He would prepare us to trust ourselves beforehand with Him, desiring nothing but what He appoints; wishing for nothing but patient, thankful hearts, to commit our way to Him; fearing nothing but to miss or fall short of His Gracious Will towards us; thankful for every thing whereby He hinders us from following our own and rivets us closer to His; glorying in nothing but that we are not our own, but His.

To think then of the blessed Saint of this day, as a pattern of holy zeal and severity, he is invested with a very aweful character. He is first named to us, as selected for a

[a] Cerinthus I. Irenæus (3. 3. 4.) says—"they were yet alive who heard" St. Polycarp, his disciple, relate this.

lowly office, "to serve tables;" yet whereas all, chosen even for this, were to be "full of the Holy Ghost and wisdom," Holy Scripture selects him, above all the rest, to name him as "a man, full of faith and of the Holy Ghost." Yet God Who assigned him this humbler place in His Service, and raised him not above it, gave him power beyond it. Immediately on his ordination to it, we are told, how "the Word of God increased," "the disciples in Jerusalem greatly multiplied," and "a great company of Priests were obedient to the Faith." He, not himself a priest of the New Law, subdued unto Christ the priests of the Old. Every word which speaks of him, declares the Might wherewith he was clothed. He was "*full* of faith and power;" he did no ordinary, but "*great* wonders and miracles among the people." The learned of five synagogues, who arose to dispute with him, fell before him; they "were not able to resist the wisdom and the spirit by which he spake." As he was to be the first to suffer for his Lord, so it was vouchsafed to him, to be brought before the very same Council on the same charge of speaking against the temple: only, the Lord they accused of foretelling that in three days He would raise a new one; the servant, that he foretold the destruction of the old. Placed before the Council, the Indwelling Spirit so shone through the "tabernacle" which he was "shortly to put off," that his face was no more like the face of man, but of the Holy Angels, who behold and reflect the Face of God. His severe rebuke closed, we hear again that he was "full of the Holy Ghost." His eye was raised above this earth, and quickened to behold things invisible. One steadfast gaze into the Heavens which were to receive him, and he saw what man could "not see and live," "the Glory of God, and Jesus, standing" to defend him, "at the Right Hand of God." And then he was permitted to take upon his lips our Lord's dying prayer, to commend to his God and Saviour his parting spirit, as his Lord committed His to His Father, to pray for his enemies, as his Lord prayed for His, and in his Saviour's words "he fell asleep;" with them

his spirit parted from his earthly frame, and passed into his Saviour's Presence, an intercessor with his Saviour, as his Saviour with The Father.

So full of greatness is every word, in which the Scripture speaks of this first of Martyrs. And so we shall be prepared to find the words which, amid all those glories, he spake by the Holy Ghost, full of solemn majesty. To look on them in one way only, as rebuke rather than instruction, they sound very awefully. They seem like the Sentence of God Himself, unveiling the human heart, developing, in signal instances of his history, man's malice, and its fruitlessness; how the succeeding generation filled up the measure of its fathers, and completed towards the Son what the former had done to the servants, rejecting the Deliverer Whom God chose. So Whom they would not have as a Deliverer, they should have as a Judge. At the close, it seems to deliver them over to that Judgment, as those who, "always resisting the Holy Ghost," were abandoned by Him, as uncircumcised and out of His Covenant, "the betrayers and murderers of the Just One." Wherefore, all the blood of the prophets whom their fathers persecuted, should, with that Righteous Blood, come upon them; not keeping the law, but slaying Him contrary to the law, they should fall under the curse of the law, from which He came to redeem them. The speech, unlike those at other times, closes with no call to repentance. From first to last it sets forth the earnest and grounds of their condemnation. It sounds like the terrible Voice of God, sealing their doom. They are cut to the heart, but repent not. It seems like the two-edged sword, to destroy and not to save; the gnashing of their teeth, an emblem of those cast into outer darkness.

So aweful and severe do the words sound, that most have probably at some time been amazed at them, and at least reverently wondered how words so sharp came out of the mouth of man. How could the ambassador of reconciliation, the messenger of peace, speak so sternly words only of overwhelming wrath! And yet, if we consider, it is but one instance of one very aweful character of Holy Scripture;

it is but one specimen of the future office of the Apostles, "on" their "twelve thrones," assessors of the Judge, to "judge the twelve tribes of Israel," and of "the Saints," who "shall judge the world." The holiest have been delegated to be the sternest rebukers of sin, taught to speak in the very tones of our Lord Himself, in Whose Name they speak, Whose Judgment they denounce or foretell. How very terribly do our Lord's own woes on the Pharisees sound! how severe His bidding to "fill up the measure of the iniquity of their fathers![b]" Both of which occur just before His prophecy of the final Judgment.[c] How, out of His Holy Mouth, have we been startled to hear the words of rebuke to Herod, "Go, tell that fox." How austere, again, His messengers! How does St. John Baptist repel those same Pharisees coming to his baptism, "Ye serpents, ye generation of vipers, who hath warned you to flee from the wrath to come?" Or St. Peter, to Elymas, the sorcerer, when he would have "turned the deputy from the faith," "O full of all subtlety and all mischief, thou child of the devil, thou enemy of all righteousness;" or to Simon Magus, "Thy money perish with thee." The Acts of the Apostles close with St. Paul's severe denunciation of judicial blindness on the Jews, "Well spake the Holy Ghost by Esaias the prophet unto our fathers, hearing ye shall hear, and shall not understand;" "for the heart of this people is waxed gross, lest they should understand with their heart, and be converted, and I should heal them." How does the same St. Paul pronounce him who loveth not the Lord Jesus Christ, to be "Anathema, maranatha," "devoted to destruction," and "awaiting the Lord's Coming," to fulfil it to the uttermost; and him who made himself High Priest to be a "whited wall," whom God should smite; and that God would "requite" Demetrius "according to his deeds." How does Ahab tremble before Elijah! or Elisha call a king "a son of a murderer," and would not look on or see a king of Israel! And Moses, "the meekest of all men upon the earth, was "very wroth with Korah and his

[b] Matt. xxiii. 32. [c] Matt. xxiv.

company," and said unto the Lord, "Respect not Thou their offering.[d]" How do the Psalmists so denounce vengeance upon God's enemies, and go along with what they denounce, as to "hate[e] them who hate God!"

There is then a very aweful power of rebuke entrusted by God to His chosen servants; and well may it fill us with awe that He has invested men, to such a degree, with His Own Attribute. Yet this same history of St. Stephen furnishes us with limitations of its use, which are still more needful for us. For man, in his waywardness, too often reverses the method of God; he is silent when he should rebuke, in what concerns God's Honour; rebukes when he should be silent, in what concerns his own. He rebukes, when he should be "as one in whose mouth are no rebukes," but "commit himself to Him That judgeth righteously." He rebukes whom he ought not, or in what spirit he ought not, or being such as ought not.

For they who rebuke should have the commission to rebuke. To rebuke is God's Office and that of those to whom God has delegated it. It is, to stand in the place of God, to pronounce the Sentence of God, and that those rebuked so far fall under that sentence. It is to take the Law of God upon our own lips, and to declare that others have so far transgressed that Law. For nothing is to be censured except what is against the Law of God. All censure, from the least to the greatest, is to apply that Law, and declare it so far broken. When we rebuke, we speak in His Name; and this we dare not presume, of ourselves. It is a very solemn act to speak any how in His Name, Who is "the Judge of all the earth," and our own. "I have not sent these prophets, saith the Lord, yet they ran; I have not spoken to them, yet they prophesied.[f]" All whom Holy Scripture speaketh of as rebuking, bore His Commission. Our very Lord, Who was God, spake not His Own words, but the Father's. He saith of Himself in prophecy, "He hath made My mouth like a sharp sword.[g]" The rest were His

[d] Num. xvi. 15 [e] Ps. cxxxix. 22. [f] Jer. xxiii. 21 [g] Is. xlix. 2.

ST. ALBERT'S COLLEGE LIBRARY

Servants, Messengers, Prophets, Apostles. The Prophets received directly the Commission "See I have this day set thee over the nations and kingdoms, to root out and to pull down, and to destroy and to throw down.[h]" The Minister speaks in His Name Whose Minister he is; and bears God's express injunction, "Them that sin rebuke before all, that others also may fear.[i]" Kings execute judgment, only by Him. Parents are for the time to their children, in the stead of the Father of all, and are, over and above, under a direct injunction to rebuke: "Withhold not correction from the child.[k]" We have all the commission, privately and in quiet, to rebuke them who sin against us—"If thy brother trespass against thee, rebuke him; and if he repent, forgive him.[l]" "The spiritual" have the commission, "in the spirit of meekness," to "restore such an one.[m]" Those very directions, *who* are to rebuke, are a caution to those to abstain who have no such commission. Even "Michael, the Archangel, brought not," unbidden, a "railing accusation,[n] but said the Lord rebuke thee." Elihu excuseth himself that he speaketh, "I am young, and ye are very old, wherefore I was afraid, and durst not shew you mine opinion; I said, Days should speak, and multitude of years should teach wisdom;" and pleads, for so doing, that he had "understanding," by "the Inspiration of the Almighty.[o]" Even St. Timothy, though a Bishop, yet, being young, is directed by St. Paul not to "rebuke[p] an Elder, but entreat him as a father." Children are taught not to instruct their parents, but to obey them; and it is mentioned as a token of God's Judgment, when "babes shall rule," and "the child behave himself proudly against the ancient.[q]" It is spoken of as the last hopeless sign of stiff-neckedness, from which there could be no amendment, "Thy people are as they that strive with the Priest.[r]"

Then also, since rebuke is the Voice of God correcting us, they who utter it should be themselves such, as to hope

[h] Jer. i. 10. [i] 1 S. Tim. v. 20. [k] Prov. xxiii. 13.
[l] Luke xvii. 3. [m] Gal. vi. 1. [n] S. Jude 9.
[o] Job xxxii, 6-8 [p] 1 S. Tim. v. 1. [q] Is. iii. 4, 5. [r] Hos. iv. 4.

that they speak that Voice. We must listen to those in authority, as our Lord bade to hearken to those who sat in Moses' seat; but they who speak, must, that they sin not, speak the Words of God, and see that they mingle not their own. They of whose rebukes Scripture speaks, are called by His Own Name, "Men of God." Being themselves God's, they spake His words. To St. Stephen, before and after that severe speech, Holy Scripture again and again bears witness, "he was full of the Holy Ghost." St. John Baptist says of our Blessed Lord Himself, "He Whom God hath sent speaketh the Words of God; for God giveth not the Spirit by measure unto Him.[s]" The sword of the Spirit is the Word of God,[t] and even thence hath it its sharpness; and, through the power of The Word, whose Word It is, doth It "pierce even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit," and "discern the thoughts and intents of the heart,[u]" coming from Him, Who is the Searcher of the heart. To the Prophet God himself saith, "Behold, *I* will make My Words in thy mouth fire, and this people wood.[x]" It devoured man, as being fire from Him, Who "is a Consuming Fire."

Further, since rebuke is of so aweful a character, and inflicts suffering, it must be given, not without suffering to ourselves also, who give it. We may not inflict pain without pain, suffering without suffering. Our Ever-blessed and Gracious Master, Who sends us suffering, Himself first suffered for us. "The Prophets, who spake in the Name of the Lord," are set forth "for an example of suffering affliction, and of patience.[y]" The Apostles were, as it were, "appointed unto death," and out of the midst of death, bearing about the marks[z] of "their Lord's" Suffering, they "reproved the world of sin," in the words which the Holy Ghost taught. Elijah and St. John delivered their stern messages, clothed in hair-cloth. In hair-cloth are the two witnesses to torment them that dwell on the earth.[a] St.

[s] S. John iii. 34.
[t] Eph. vi. 17.
[u] Heb. iv. 12.; Jer. xvii. 10.; Rom. viii. 27.; Rev. ii. 23.
[x] Jer. v. 14.
[y] St. James v. 10.
[z] Gal. vi. 17.
[a] Rev. xi. 10.

Stephen delivered his aweful rebuke, as one ready to lay down his life, and was inspired to utter words which should draw on his death. The Bishops[b] of old, when they shut out of the congregation of the Lord those convicted of notorious sin, wept, and mourned, and humbled themselves with those whom they were appointed so to punish. All suffering should be inflicted with "sympathy," that is, sharing the suffering. It is to forget our common nature, to inflict it without suffering. "If, when one member suffer, each other member must," Scripture says, "suffer with it," how against nature were it for one member to inflict suffering, and itself not suffer! It were to forget our common Master, Whose office we take; our common frailty, alike liable to be tempted, and to need rebuke; it were to make ourselves as God, Who Alone cannot suffer. It were rather thereby to make ourselves as Satan, who alone torments without suffering, and is made to suffer, since of himself he will not.

And we shall suffer in the suffering which rebuke causes, if we love. Love cannot see, much less cause, suffering, without itself also suffering. How do Jeremiah's eyes, who had so sternly to rebuke, ever "run down with tears, for the breach of the daughter of his people." How did our Lord weep over the city, whose destruction He denounceth. How does St. Paul wish himself "accursed from Christ" for his people, whose fall he declareth, having "great heaviness and continual sorrow in his heart![c]" How does he grieve with the Corinthian Church, which he rebuked so sharply, so that though "a door was opened" to him "to preach Christ's Gospel," he could not, finding "no rest in his spirit.[d]" St. Stephen, whose love is so veiled, through the sharpness of the message which he had to deliver, had scarcely closed its sharpest words, when he closed his life, united, in love as in suffering, with the Pattern of Infinite

[b] See Sozom. vii. 16. in Nicholls' notes on Common Prayer Book. Commination Service. Wheatley, Ib. Bingham 18. 2. 2.

[c] Rom. ix. 2, 3.

[d] 2 Cor. ii. 12, 13.

Love, and breathing out his soul in his Lord's prayer of Love for his murderers. Our Lord's Rebukes are the very proofs of His Love. "As many as I love," He saith, "I rebuke and chasten.[e]" They who would rebuke with our Lord, must love with our Lord. Unloving rebuke is but the vent of anger and selfishness or pride. The very order of God's Providence teaches us to love whom we rebuke. They to whom He assigns the office, are such as must needs feel love, and sorrow for and with those they rebuke. A parent loves the child he rebukes; a pastor, his flock; all whom we naturally have to rebuke, are in some way drawn near to us, and so we must in some degree love them. Those whom persons do often rebuke so sharply and so thoughtlessly, those who minister to their household-wants, are one family with them, and should be loved for their service sake, as well as for their common Master. On this very ground, St. Paul commands us, "Masters, do the same things" i. e. service, "unto them, forbearing threatening: knowing that your Master also is in Heaven.[f]" We feel, for the most part, that we have no call to rebuke one, wholly a stranger, because, in whatever degree we may love him, we feel that he knows not that we love him; we should not feel called to rebuke him at all, did we not, for Christ's sake, love his soul.

Such then being the condition of Christian rebuke, as set forth in the blessed Saint of this day, following the pattern of his Divine Master, we must own, alas! that herein a sore disease has spread over our whole way of acting, our whole Church and nation, in public and in private, and well-nigh in all our relations to each other. How full are we of rebuke, and how little is it restrained to those whom God has appointed! How little is given in God's Name, as by those whom He has sanctified, with how little sympathy, how little love! How little reproof do the Ministers of God venture directly to give to their people, knowing how little they will bear, how soon be alienated. Rather, we seem to reverse in every thing God's appointment. Those commissioned,

[e] Rev. iii. 19. [f] Eph. vi. 9.

the Ministers, rebuke the people little; the people, uncommissioned, rebuke their Ministers much. The young speak against the aged. The Church has lost her power to censure, and her children censure their Mother at will; reverencing her not, they understand her not; understanding her not, they rail against her. Rebuke of Churches, of fellow-Christians in our own Church, of brethren, seem almost our daily occupation; we "pass our time in hearing or telling some new thing" against our brethren. What we daily read is full of censure; and yet how little love! Who would think that these are servants of One Master, members of one Body, living, as far as any of us do live, by One Spirit, having One Faith, One Hope, even One Redeeming Lord, with Whom and through Whom we all hope, in one holy happy company, to live for ever? Who would think that we were the disciples of that Master, Whose disciples were to be known by their love, one to the other?

But these things we can only remedy, by not joining in them ourselves, not partaking in them, praying in our Church's manifold prayers for peace. For this unloving spirit would not so reign abroad, were we each ruling our own spirits at home. Great crying evils are but the sum of all our separate sins. To cure them, we must be healed ourselves.

Reproof then, as we see in the Saint of this day, requires the presence of many Christian graces. Due discipline of ourselves herein may aid to foster them in ourselves, while we edify our neighbour.

We should then reprove, as using God's Words, applying them to ourselves first, that wherein we judge another, we condemn not ourselves. If we ourselves commit things like to those for which we reprove others, what do we but bear witness against ourselves? If as masters, we reprove our servants of carelessness to us, and ourselves are, all the while, careless of our duty to our Heavenly Master; if we demand strict attention to our own wishes, are vexed with forgetfulness of our slightest directions, and are ourselves inattentive to our own duties, and habitually forgetful of our Lord's

Commands, may not our Lord say to us also, "Out of thy own mouth will I judge thee, thou wicked servant?" Our earthly relations shadow forth our Heavenly; and this, among others, has this end, that in acting, instructing, obeying, commanding, reproving, in things earthly, we be reminded of our Heavenly duties. Shall we expect our servants to await our return, and not ourselves await our Lord's? shall we reprove our children for disobedience, and not strive to obey our Father Which is in heaven? And yet how often do masters and fathers reprove not for these only, but for the very sins whereof themselves are guilty, and therefore are unheeded, and gain this only, that they condemn themselves.

Then, we must reprove in holiness. Before we allow ourselves to be indignant with sin in others, we must be severe with ourselves. The sword which should pierce through all the fences of self-love to the hearts of others, we must first have proved on our own. We dare not carry on a Heavenly warfare with weapons of this world's temper. Our zeal for the Lord God of Hosts must be Elijah's, not Jehu's. We dare not speak against the Baal whom the world worshippeth, while we ourselves go astray after the calves in Bethel and Dan. We dare not pluck the mote out of our brother's eye, while the beam is in our own, or bring others under a yoke which we ourselves do not bear. All the eminent servants of God, who have borne witness to Him in a perverse generation, have first, by long discipline, subdued self, and then, through the Spirit Which worked in themselves, awed the world.

Then we must reprove with humility. St. Paul says even to "the spiritual," "reprove such an one in the spirit of meekness, considering thyself, lest thou also be tempted." How much more such as most of us, who are, alas! not spiritual. To reprove with humility, we must reprove only those whom we have a right to reprove; not our elders; not those set over us; not those manifestly superior to ourselves. And to those who seem our equals, or who are in any way subject to us, we dare not assume any superiority,

as though we were, on the whole, better than they. Even when charity constrains us to blame these, we should tell them of their fault, as being indeed in this one thing to blame, yet, inwardly at least, in the consciousness of our own manifold offences, counting ourselves, in God's Sight, beneath their feet.

Lastly, we must reprove in love. We must not, as we are wont, measure the fault by the vexation it causes ourselves. To speak God's Words, we must forget self; we must consider reproof as God's Commission, for the benefit of others' souls, and so the more carefully separate from it any thing of our own. Rather should we be tender, in proportion as the fault affects ourselves. Our one object must be to win, as we may, souls to Christ; and so we should reprove as may best win them; in private, rather than before others; for their sakes, not for our own; as they will best listen; seeking to speak God's words; tenderly, even as our Gracious Master, when He most sharply rebuked us for sin, has ever dealt with us most tenderly.

My brethren, suffer me once more to say, how different is this from most which we witness around us, from too much which we have done ourselves, or perhaps even now are, from time to time, betrayed into. Is the tone of rebuke, such as we hear it, the sorrowing tone of those who love, and mourn over those whom they rebuke? Is it the sympathizing voice of those who are pained themselves when they rebuke sharply, who sorrow to have to cut deep into a neighbour's soul? Is it the reverential voice of persons speaking God's Words? Are we, when we rebuke, alive to God's Honour only?

If this be not so, think not these common and ordinary topics, on which to speak within the compass of the great Festival of our Blessed Lord's Nativity.[g] "Peace, good will to men," was part of the Angel-message, which even now we heard; peace with men, flowing from the Peace and Love of God. "Peace, not as the world giveth," was our

[g] Preached when the Feast of St. Stephen fell on the Lord's Day after the Nativity.

Lord's last gift; love and peace are among the first-fruits of the Spirit. It is the Comforter Who was to "reprove the world of sin;" comforting, while He rebuked. "Peacemakers" are, in an especial way, "the children of God.[h]" Love is the badge of His disciples; for love (if one may dare so to speak) is the very Unity of the Ever-blessed Trinity, is the very Essence of God, is, in us, His Effluence and His Presence.

Think not, then, any words misplaced, which may recall us from unloving ways; nor any thing little, wherein we may fulfil His Commandments. It is in the midst of common and ordinary duties that our life is placed; common occupations make up our lives. "The righteousness which is of faith" saith not, "Who shall ascend into Heaven? (that is, to bring Christ down from above:) or who shall descend into the deep? (that is, to bring up Christ again from the dead;") but, "The word is very nigh unto thee, in thy mouth, and in thy heart, that thou mayest do it.[i]" By faith and love we obey; but by obedience are the faith and love, which God gives us, strengthened. "If a man love Me," saith our Lord, "He will keep My Words," "and My Father will love him, and We will come unto him, and make Our Abode with him." Hereafter, if by His Mercy we attain, will be the time, if so it be, for enwrapt contemplation and love without duty; now it is part of our humility to do common things as in God's Sight, to be content to learn how to do them, to be diligent in them. Strange humility indeed, when God humbleth Himself to behold us, to think any thing common, wherein we may approve ourselves to Him!

And yet are they common things? is the right discharge of duty not too sadly an uncommon thing? Are holiness, love, humility, the sense of God's Presence, the acting, in what things soever, as His delegates, are these common things? or rather are they not the very privileges of the Holy Angels? were it not to live upon earth an Angel-life?

[h] S. Matt. v. 9.

[i] Rom. x. 6, 7; Deut. xxx. 14.

Rather shall we then indeed love our Lord, when we seek to please Him in all things, speak or are silent, eat and drink, or be hungry and thirsty, sleep or wake, rebuke or suffer rebuke, labour or rest, do or suffer, with a single eye to His Service. Then shall we be faithful servants, when we are "faithful in that which is least," when we count it a great thing to keep the least of His Commandments, when we long to have His Commandments laid upon us, to live under His Rule, to have no will of our own, but in all things to be conformed to, to do, and to suffer, His Will.

God give us grace so to love Him, that we may in all things see Him; in all, obey; and obeying, see Him more clearly and love Him less unworthily; and so, in that blissful harmony of obedience and of love, be prepared to see Him "face to face;" living unto Him, be prepared through His Mercy to die unto Him, Who died for us, that we might live to Him and with Him, and be His own for ever; all, perfected in love and unity, as full of Him, Who by the Blood of His Cross, has knit all things in One, for an habitation of God, Who is One, and is Love.

SERMON VII.

JOY OUT OF SUFFERING.

FEAST OF THE CIRCUMCISION.

JOB XIII. 15.

"Though He slay me, yet will I trust in Him."

THE world begins this day with glad greetings, and words of hope, and preparations of joy, and undefined looking and longing for future excitement and greater joy in store. Its Saviour begins it with Suffering and Humiliation, the first Shedding of His Redeeming Blood, foredating Its full Outpouring on Calvary, and His Humbling Himself to the Death of the Cross. Born under the law, to redeem us from the curse of the law, He not only fulfilled it as One Righteous, but in the seeming of a sinner. Aweful words they are to speak. Yet the Humiliation of the Circumcision is, in one way, greater than the Humiliation of the Cross, in that the Cross seemed laid upon Him by the malice and envy of sinful men, and even Pilate knew that "the Chief Priests for envy had delivered Him;" the Circumcision was laid upon Him directly by the Father. At the Cross, dumb nature bore witness to His Majesty in His Humility; "the very stones cried out." His timid, unjust judge, unknowing, even on the Cross, confessed His Kingly Title. He who, in the judgment-hall, had said to Him—"Art Thou a king

then?" himself placed on His Cross, in three languages, His Name of King, acknowledging His Universal Sway, and confessed in action, what had been foretold in words, that He should "reign through Death." Earth and Heaven, sin and death, owned Him as their Lord, when Crucified. The sun shrank from beholding its Creator's Death; the rocks rent, as it were, in mourning for their Lord; the grave gave up its dead, in that, by His Death, death was conquered; even sin, at that hour, parted with a soul which all his whole life it had held captive; and He, Who had scarcely any longer the form of Man, put forth His power, as God, over the heart of His lost creature. At His Circumcision, (so truly had He taken the likeness of sinful flesh), He seemed to own Himself a sinner, "conceived in sin." Not lawless hands, but the Law of God, not the law as perverted by wicked men, "we have a law, and by our law He ought to die," but the Command of God Himself enjoined the Suffering and the Shame, that He might not die. "The uncircumcised man-child, whose flesh of his foreskin is not circumcised, that soul shall be cut off from his people; he hath broken My Covenant.[a]" No voice proclaimed then, that He was not what He seemed, a sinner of sinful race. His Eternal Birth of the Eternal Father was veiled; veiled that Birth, in time, of the Holy Ghost. His Virgin-Birth "without spot of sin, to make us free from all sin," was known only to Angels. Man knew not the token of his Deliverer, nor Satan of his Destroyer. Satan had not bruised our Redeemer's Heel, had he known that the Cross upon which he stretched Him, would have crushed his own head. And so the guardian of His Virgin-Mother's purity, and her shield against reproach, hid the Glory of His Spotless Birth; "Being, as was supposed, the Son of Joseph." And, as though the son of Joseph, He was made subject to the law of all conceived and born in sin; "For who can bring a clean thing out of an unclean?" The Holy One was to receive the mark of man's unholiness; the Atoner was to be atoned

[a] Gen. xvii. 14.

for; the Spotless Birth of the Creator to be cleansed by the offering of two poor, worthless creatures, "the pair of turtle doves or two young pigeons." He Who came to do away all sin, was all His Life long to bear "the reproach[b] of Egypt," the badge of shame, the antidote of sinful and debasing passion. Mute now were the praises of the Heavenly Choirs which, eight days past, were heard; heard in Heaven, but unheard on earth. The star was lighting the Wise Men on their way, but not as yet did it stand "over where The Young Child was." Now there was one deep interval of shame. One only remnant was there of all that glory, and that hidden; the Name of JESUS, "which was so named of the Angel before He was Conceived in the womb.[c]" And is it thus, O Lord, that Thou hast in the flesh to receive Thine Eternal Name of Saviour, as though Thou wert rather of the number of the saved? Circumcision rather prophesied of Thee and Thy Resurrection, and the new beginning of our race in Thee, and our new birth and renewal, and the putting off of the body of the sins of the flesh in Thee, and Thy Grace cleansing us from our birth-sin and the lusts of the flesh, and freeing us from the wages of sin, eternal death; and must Thou be rather as one so cleansed? Must Thy sorrows thus thicken around Thy Sacred Infancy? Are such the Festivals we are to hold, of all the thirty-three years of Thy Spotless All-Holy Life? eight days past Thy Birth, as an Outcast from Thine Own, thrust aside, and in the wintry cold of a stable and a manger, and now suffering under the stern knife of the Law! A Homeless Stranger in this the land of our banishment, which we make too sadly our home, to open to us our Everlasting Home in Heaven! in the likeness of sinful flesh, thus also to suffer for us, that we, even in sinful flesh, might cease from sin!

Yes! such are the only Festivals of our Lord's Life on earth, all crowded within its first twelve days, (the symbol of the Presence of the Trinity in His Church collected

[b] Josh. v. 9.

[c] S. Luke ii. 21.

from the four quarters of the world.) His Holy Birth, in cold and penury, homeless and houseless, owned, as their Master, by the rude cattle, disowned by ruder men, His sons, and thereupon the worship of the simple-hearted, and of the Heavenly Host: next, the shame as of a sinner, and thereon the worship of the three kings; as it is written, "Kings[d] shall see and arise, princes also shall worship. The kings of Tarshish and of the isles shall bring presents: the kings of Sheba and Seba shall offer gifts." And this is their whole lesson for us, as of our Blessed Lord's whole Life in the Flesh. The joy of the world ends in sorrow; sorrow with Christ and in Christ, yea, and for our sins, for Christ's sake, ends in joy. "Though He slay me," yea, because "He slays me," "yet will I trust in Him."

We have many of us too sorely felt the one; how the world's joy ends in sorrow. Wherein has mostly issued the long peace even of the Church? Even the Holy Martyr St. Cyprian[e] had to mourn; "Long repose corrupted the discipline which had come down to us from Him; every one was applying himself to the increase of wealth, and, forgetting both the conduct of believers under the Apostles, and what ought to be their conduct in every age, with insatiable eagerness for gain, devoted themselves to the multiplying of possessions. The world was renounced in words only, not in deeds. Priests were wanting in religious devotedness, Ministers in entireness of faith. There was no mercy in works, no discipline in manners. Ties of marriage were formed with unbelievers; members of Christ were abandoned to the heathen." Oaths, false swearing, sinful adorning of the person, in men and women, unabating quarrels, lasting breaches of charity, self-abandonment to envy and dissension, envenomed quarrels, carelessness as to single-mindedness or the faith, eagerness to exalt self, contemptuousness in high places, contempt of their sacred Calling by the very Bishops, abandoning their Sees and their people for lucre and worldly vocations; such fill up the Holy Martyr's picture of the fruits of ease, although resting only for

[d] Is. xlix. 7.; Ps. lxxii. 10.

[e] De lapsis fin. Ep. xi. init.

a while from heathen fires and racks. And what was the remedy? "The Divine Judgment awakened our Faith from a declining, nay, almost a slumbering state." The Church was at once desolated and purified. The trying, severing, "torrent's[f] blaze of persecution" bore, through the Mercy of God, her thousands to Heaven, as in a chariot of fire. Alas! it was, to tens of thousands, the forerunner of the fires of hell, unless where the deserved sentence was turned aside through God's Gift of deep repentance. "Amid a wide carnage of the fallen, there remained but a remnant yet trembling; a small band, yet firmly standing.[g]"

And when things were so in Martyrs' times, shall we be slow to confess the sins of our forefathers and our own? Shall we not rather thank God, although with awe, that twice in the later history of the Church among us, His Own Arm was laid bare in chastening us, and He allowed us well-nigh, at last, to be trampled under foot of men in His Own Name. And now, after a dreary century, during which the Church here, as elsewhere, seemed sunk in a deep lethargy, shall we be startled by any pangs, or any threatened woe, the birth-pangs of a holier, more devoted state? Shall we choose our own chastisements, or think that we could bear better any than those we have? Shall we not rather, with holy David, commit ourselves into the Hands of God, to chasten, correct, wound, heal, sift, cleanse, as He wills, so that He give us Grace to bear, and "deliver us not over unto death?" "Though He slay me, yet will I trust in Him."

And with the Church, so our own souls also. We must not, would not, choose our suffering. "Any pang but this," is too often the wounded spirit's cry; "any trouble but this." And its very cry may bear witness to itself, that its Merciful Physician knows well where its disease lies, how it is to be probed to the quick, how to be healthfully healed. "Though He slay me, yet will I trust in Him." The holy Patriarch says not, "though He slay all my children at one

[f] Christian Year, Nineteenth Sunday after Trinity.
[g] Ep. xi. fin. comp. § 1. x. 2. xiv. 1. xxx. 5. 7. xxxi. 1. 7.

blow," "though He send His sore judgments of fire and sword, and take away my goods," "though He strip me naked, as I came from my mother's womb, and make me sit down in ashes," "though He smite me from head to foot with sores, and put my brethren far from me, and I become strange to my wife, and young children despise me:"— for all this, and more, had God already done. He saith, "though He slay me." This great servant of God takes, unknowing, into his mouth, the very words wherewith Satan had slandered him. "Skin for skin,[h]" said the Accuser, "yea, all that a man hath, will he give in exchange for his life." As if he would say, "he bears what moves him less, for fear of what would touch him nearer; he hopes that suffering without may save him from sufferings within; he gives willingly that he *hath*, to save that he *is:* his patience is a subtle love of self; he bears not all this for love of Thee, or out of faith in Thee and hope in Thee, but out of love for self, and the hope to escape what may wound self most deeply. Let the iron enter into his soul, and he will deny Thee then." And Job, though he knew it not, was given over into the Accuser's hands. All he might destroy, except that inner life, whereby he held fast to God. "Behold he is in thine hand; but save his life." For how should Satan touch that life, which is God's very Presence in the soul? And Job, in those great words, refutes Satan's lie, "Though He slay *me*, yet will I trust in Him." He holds not back his very self. He gives up freely all which he *is*, his very I; like that devout Christian soul which, when sore pressed and oppressed by heaviness, yet held him fast by God, and said in an ecstasy of love and trust, "If God casts me into Hell, I will hold so fast by HIM, that He shall go there too; I will not let Him go, and Hell will be no Hell to me." Truly! for the love of God would make Hell Heaven, as its absence would make Heaven Hell. "Though He slay *me!*" Oh glorious faith of older Saints, and hope of the Resurrection, and love stronger than death, and blessed bareness of

[h] Job. ii. 4. See S. Gregory on the place, T. 1. p. 132, 3. Oxf. Tr.

the soul, which, for God, would part with all but God, knowing that in God it will find all; yea, which would give its very self, trusting Him Who took itself from itself, that it should find again, (as all the redeemed *will* find,) itself a better self in God! "Though He slay *me*, yet will I trust in Him." Oh blessed passage of the soul through the valley of death! which dies, to live; which hopes, though in a way she is not; which *is* and is not; is slain and trusteth in Him Who slayeth her; "dieth,[i] and behold she lives." For the soul lives, not in herself, but "by the faith in the Son of God, Who loved her, and gave Himself for her." Not she lives, but "He liveth in her;" and so death to all but Him, yea, to and in her very self also, is His Enlarged Life to her. It is the very life of the Blessed, to be nothing in themselves, but vessels wherein God can pour in the Fulness, and Bliss, and Richness, and Transporting, Overpowering, Overwhelming Sweetness and Tenderness of His Love, and they, not of themselves, but through and with His Own Love, shall love Himself. It is the very Joy of their Lord, whereinto they shall enter, to Joy not with their own joy, but with His; to be themselves, only to be not themselves; to *be*, only to have within them the Being of God, Which is His Love.

Yet till we attain, by His Mercy, to Himself, and death itself is past, there is often need, amid the many, manifold forms of death, wherewith we are encompassed, for that holy steadfastness of the Patriarch's trust, "Though He slay me, yet will I trust in Him." The first trials by which God would win us back to Himself, yea, though they seem to part asunder soul and body, are often not the severest. Near as they touch us, they are, most often, without us. They may change the whole life at once; they may seem to reverse the prophet's words, and "behind" it may seem "as the garden of Eden,[k] before, like a desolate wilderness;" the staggered, dizzied, soul may not dare to look backwards or forwards, to ought which belongs to this earth; they may leave the soul bared of all but itself; yea, scarcely leave itself to itself. For, mostly, those severe blows whereby God

[i] 2 Cor. vi. 8.; Gal. i. 20. [k] Joel ii. 3.

brings the soul to itself, are a rending from it part of itself, since they are a rending from it, what it loved, as, perhaps more than, itself; as even a Heathen calls a friend, "the half[l] of his soul." Yet torn, bleeding, scarce alive, except for suffering, as the soul may thus be; bewildered, dead to all interest, or care, or pleasure in things around it; as if it were dead, yet are these the lightest trials of the returning soul. They reach not still its very inmost self. For to feel a Nearness of God, even in chastisement, is a deeper, stiller, aweful indeed, yet more thrilling joy, then the intensest, or the most even tide of joy, on which the soul rested, even as the gift of God. Even in the most penetrating of this life's chastisements, God replaces His gifts with the hope of Himself. Chastisement is blessed to the trusting soul, because, though an aweful form of His Presence, it *is* His Presence. "The Lord[m]" saith the Psalmist, "hath chastened and corrected me:—but He hath not given me over unto death." His very Chastening is a token to the soul that it is not abandoned. And gladlier often to the bereaved soul is this one token, than all besides is heavy. What is the intensest blackness, if His Bow be in it and span it, and enfold and measure its height and breadth of darkness, by the unfoldings of His Light, the radiant, glorious, Pledge of His Loving-Kindness? To feel is to live. To know that one is chastened, is to know that one is not abandoned. Be any what he may, he feels that he is a son yet. The deeper the iron enters, the deeper he knows is the sore which God would lay open and heal; yet the deeper too the Mercy of God, Who gives not over what needeth so deep a cure. So true is that which even a Heathen[n] saw from nature, "he draweth strength and courage from the very sword" which wounds him. Here too indeed, is there need of faith and hope. For even these very Chastisements of God, when they do not soften, harden. They, like every Gift of God, yea, the very Gospel of His Son and the tidings of Redemp-

[l] Hor. Carm. L. 1. Od. 3. See S. Aug. Conf. iv. 6. p. 52, Oxf. Tr.
[m] Ps. cxviii. 18.
[n] Ab ipso Sumit opes animumque ferro. Hor.

tion, are a savour of "life unto life,"[o] or "of death unto death." "The sorrow of the world worketh death.[p]" Sorrow which cometh from the love of the world only, hath its end in the world; sorrow, which cometh from the Love of God, or turneth unto the Love of God, hath its end in God. Sorrow of the world maketh rebellious against God; sorrow which subdues unto God, is from God. Times of God's sorest Judgments have been times of man's deepest rebellions, and have fostered them. The recklessness of the impenitent has grown, with the sternness of God's Calls to penitence. How should it not be? Contempt of God's Judgments is almost beyond the very sin of devils, who "believe and tremble," and is a near forerunner of the unpardonable sin, casting forth with a strong hand, the last remains of Grace from the soul. "In that day,[q]" says the Prophet, "did the Lord God of Hosts call to weeping, and to mourning, and to baldness, and to girding with sackcloth; and behold joy and gladness, slaying oxen, and killing sheep, eating flesh, and drinking wine: let us eat and drink; for to-morrow we shall die. And it was revealed in mine ears by the Lord of Hosts, Surely this iniquity shall not be purged from you till ye die, saith the Lord God of Hosts." Yet since this is so, the more must the penitent think it an undeserved Mercy of God, that his own sorrows have not hardened him, the more deeply thank his God that, through the prayers of others perhaps, or of the Church, or out of the Abyss of God's forecoming Mercy, He, with the chastisement, gave the Grace to profit by it.

Yet these outward griefs are often but the "beginning of sorrows." Birth-pangs they often are, through which the soul is, by the Grace of God, born again from its state of death to life in God. These are infantine trials fitted for the tenderness of new-born souls. Deeper pains are often reserved, until the soul, grown and strengthened through Grace, can endure a more searching, fiery, cleansing. Outward trials bear with them their own witness; conscience owns them; nature itself approves them; our sense of jus-

[o] 2 Cor. ii. 16. [p] 2 Cor. vii. 10. [q] Is. xxii. 12-14.

tice takes their side and calls them good; pious examples of Holy Scripture put words in our mouth and teach us how to use them; God pronounces so manifoldly, "Blessed are those whom He chasteneth." In these, too, the soul itself is not disordered in its inner self. Wounded as it may be to the very "dividing asunder of soul and spirit," yet it is whole in that whereby it judges of itself; it can behold its own wounds and the Hand of God, wounding to make whole, slaying to give life.

Deeper and more difficult far are those sorrows wherewith God afflicts the very soul herself, and in divers ways, "makes[r] her to possess her former iniquities." A bitter thing indeed it is, to have to turn to God with a cold, decayed heart; "an evil thing and bitter" to have destroyed ourselves. Yet having so done, gracious and merciful is it, if Almighty God shew us somewhat of the depth of that bitterness, that we may never know its full bitterness in the depths of Hell. Merciful and very good are all the scourges of the All-Good and All-Merciful. The deeper, the more merciful; the more inward, the more cleansing. The more they enter into the very soul, the more they open it for the healing Presence of God. The more they slay its very self, the more do they convey to it the Virtue of Christ's Death. The less it lives, the more Christ liveth in it. Hence it has been seen that God mostly doth not send these trials at first upon the soul, but when it is somewhat strengthened by His Grace, to endure this healthful probing and opening for greater Grace. The beginnings of conversion mostly have sweetness, whereby God allures the soul from the deadening sweetness whereby it destroyed itself. "Gracious is God," saith a holy man,[s] "who doth not suffer us to be tempted above that we are able, nor alloweth the worm of conscience to infest us beyond measure. And especially in the beginnings of conversion, He sootheth our ulcers with the Oil of Mercy; that neither the amount of the disease, nor the

[r] "Prayer for persons troubled in mind or in conscience," in "Visitation for the Sick," from Job xiii. 27.

[s] S. Bern. de conv. c. 5.

difficulty of the cure, should become known to it, more than is beneficial; yea, rather a sort of ease smileth, as it were, upon it, which afterward disappeareth, when it hath its senses exercised, and thereon, perhaps, strife is appointed to it."

Manifold are these clouds whereby God hides, for the time, the Brightness of His Presence, and He seemeth, as it were, to threaten again to bring a destroying flood over our earthliness. Yet one character they have in common, that the soul can hardly believe itself in a state of Grace. "If it be so," is the common cry of all, "why am I thus?[t]" Can God indeed dwell in a heart thus defiled? are this and this foulness, the tokens of His Presence? Can God and Satan indeed have power over the heart together? I feel too miserably the presence of one; dare I indeed hope the Blessed Presence of the Other, Unseen, Unfelt, Unknown? Where is faith, when Satan can, at will, pour in his doubts? Or love, when all seems so dry and cold, and hard thoughts come in unbidden, as though lords and owners of the heart in their own domain? Where is life, when devotion seems so lifeless? Or holiness, when the soul is trampled upon by unholy thoughts, and its broken fences shut them not out? Where is any cleaving to God, when, at Holy Communion Itself, some chance thought or sight can part the soul with, if not from, its God? How is the heart broken which can thus rebel? how humble, which can thus judge others, see so acutely others' faults, rebel so proudly against any touch of shame, feel so sensitively to the quick any slight? Where, in all this dreary winter and this chill damp mist, are any tokens of the Presence of that Sun of the soul, which, where It is, encircleth and enlighteneth it from end to end, and there is "nothing hid from the Heat thereof."

Hard indeed is it for hope to live, when faith thus seems dead and love grown cold. Hard is it to trust in God, when the soul's very self seems slain; and hope seems forbidden by the very senses, and sight, and conscience, and self-knowledge. How can it be beloved by God, when it seems to

[t] Gen. xxv. 22.

itself so hateful? how endured by Him, when it cannot bear itself? Yet on that very ground is it beloved by God, because it hates itself. Deep hatred of what the sinful soul has been, empties it of that self-love which estranges it from its God, and He Who "satisfieth the empty soul," in His time shall fill it with His Goodness. Self-hating displeasure at its sin, casts out its idols from His temple, that He again may more fully indwell it. It could not feel the full hatefulness of sin which it obeyed, nor the force of the weight which it resisted not, nor see the dreariness of the dungeon, which had no light in it, nor know the poison it breathed, when it knew not the freshness of gales from Heaven. And so, perhaps most frequently, God for a time casts back the converted soul, and plunges it, as it were, amidst the phantoms of its former foulness, and allows it to be assailed and tortured by them, that it may learn the more to hate what He hates, and so, through its very hatred, may gain the love of what He loves.

Faint not then, thou weary soul, but trust! If thou canst not hope, act as thou wouldest, if thou didst hope. If thou canst see nothing but Hell before thee, shut thine eyes and cast thyself blindly into the infinite Abyss of God's Mercy, and the Everlasting Arms will, though thou know it not, receive thee and upbear thee. Hide thee in the Cleft of the Rock riven for thee, thy Saviour's Wounded Side, until this tyranny be overpast. If buffeted by the waves, thou wouldest not let go a rope, which held thee to the Rock! So now, though "all His Waves and Storms seem to pass over thee," hold thee but the faster to Him Who, Unseen, holdeth thee. Without Him, thou couldest not even hate thy sin. Hatred, in thyself, of what is contrary to God, is love of God. If thou canst not love with the affections, love with the will, or will to love. If thou canst not love as thou wouldest, do what thou canst. If thy heart seems to have died within thee, cleave to God with the understanding. If God seem to thy mind, as it were, a phantom which to it has no reality, if thy prayers seem to be but words with no substance, sent idly into the

air, not ascending unto thy God; if things unseen seem to thee a dream, things seen the only reality; if fervid words move thee not, thoughts of love kindle thee not, the Passion of Christ melt thee not, yet despond not; but "out of the deep cry unto God, and He will hear thy voice.[u]" He has recovered out of deeper depths, for whence is the penitent recovered but out of "the depths of Hell?[x]" "Out of the belly of Hell," says the prophet Jonas,[y] "cried I, and Thou heardest my voice. I said, I am cast out of the sight of Thine Eyes, yet will I look again towards Thy Holy Temple. The waters compassed me about, even to the soul: the depths closed me round about; the weeds were wrapped about my head. I went down to the bottoms of the mountains: the earth with her bars was about me for ever; yet hast thou brought up my life from corruption, O Lord, my God. When my soul fainted within me, I remembered the Lord, and my prayer came in unto Thee, into Thine Holy Temple."

"Though He slay me, I will trust in Him." Seemeth this a great thing, brethren? The great holy words will mean yet more, "Lo! if He slay me, I will trust in Him," not "although" only, but "*because*" He slayeth me. It is life to be touched by the Hand of God; to be slain is, through the Cross of Christ, the pledge of the Resurrection. Yes; then may our hearts be strung and nerved, when at His Pitiful Touch, "the sinew shrinks." It is the Redeemer's Hand, which upholds while It seems to cripple, strengthens, while He seemeth to put forth His Strength, against our weakness; by His Strength we have power with God, while we can only weep and make supplication unto Him.[z] Not sensible comforts, nor delight in prayer, nor His Very Voice to the heart, nor Tokens of His Presence, nor the Overflowings of His Consolations, *may be* such a proof of His Love for the soul, as the unseen, unfelt, Strength by which He keeps the fainting soul in life, to trust in Him. Consolation is the stay of the weakness of the creature: desolation was, for our sake, the Choice of the Redeemer. When His Human

[u] Ps. cxxx. 1.
[y] Jonah ii. 2.—7.
[x] Prov. xix. 18.
[z] Gen. 32; Hos. xii. 3, 4.

Nature was all but perfected and consecrated by Suffering; when the last Act of Obedience to The Father's Will "even to the Death of the Cross" was all but completed; when His Perfect Obedience was effacing the sins of a whole world, then withheld He from His Sacred Humanity the consolation of His Divinity, and, forsaken by man, willed He, to seem to be forsaken by God also. In the entrance on His Ministry, that Voice was heard, "This is My Beloved Son, in Whom I am well pleased:" at its close, the Voice "My God, My God, why hast Thou forsaken Me?" is followed only by That, "Father, into Thy Hands I commend My Spirit," to give us some glimpse into the meaning of that great word, "Though He slay me, yet will I trust in Him."

"Into His Hands," Brethren, let us now, for this year, and for all the years of time, and for eternity, "commend our spirits." Whether for the Church or for ourselves, let us not take ourselves into our own hands, or choose our own lot. "My times are in Thy Hands.[a]" He loveth the Church, which He died to purchase, His Own Body, and all the members of His Own Body, better than we can; He loveth us better and more wisely than we ourselves. He Who made us, loveth us better than we who unmade ourselves; He Who died for us, better than we who destroyed ourselves; He Who would sanctify us for a holy Temple unto Himself, better than we who defiled what He hallowed. Fear we not then any thing which threateneth; shrink we not back from any thing which falleth on us. Rather let us, though with trembling, hold up our hearts to Him, to make them His Own, in what way He willeth. "If He willeth that we should be comforted, let us too will it; if that we should have desolation, Lord, let us not draw back from it.[b]" Pray we Him, by virtue of His Holy Circumcision, in what way He seeth good, to circumcise our hearts, to cut, yea, burn, if He see needful, in this life, and spare for ever. Let us neither outrun Him, nor hold back;

[a] Ps. xxxi. 15.

[b] Paradise for the Christian soul, (Act of Resignation), P. i. p. 81.

neither step on the waters without His Bidding, nor fear if we behold them boisterous; neither be troubled, if for the time He withhold affliction, nor if, without or within, He giveth us of His Cup to drink. Give we Him our hearts, to prepare, in whatever way He will, to be made fit vessels for His Love, yea, for Himself. Circumcise, yea, cut them, Lord, round and round, until none of the vanities or love of this world cling unto them; break and bruise them in pieces, that they never come together again, as they once were; melt them, if Thou see good, in the furnace of affliction, or by the Spirit of burning, until Thou purely purge away their dross; press them, and oppress with anguish, if so only they can be emptied of all which is not Thou, or loved for Thee; give them faintness and weariness, if so only they may "faint for Thy" Heavenly "Courts," and long to rest in Thee Alone.

Only, O Lord, strengthen our hearts with that Bread which came down from Heaven, to give Life unto the world, even Thyself; give us Thy Grace, and so deal with us as Thou willest; "give[c] what Thou commandest, and command what Thou willest;" if Thou slay us, give us trust in Thee; "O Lord, in Thee have I trusted, let me never be confounded:" let me not be confounded, for ever!

[c] S. Aug. Con. x. 29, p. 204, Oxf. Tr.

SERMON VIII.

GOD CALLETH THEE.

SEPTUAGESIMA.

St. Matthew xx. 6, 7.

"*And about the eleventh hour, He went out and found others standing idle, and saith unto them, Why stand ye here all the day idle? They say unto Him, Because no man hath hired us. He saith unto them, Go ye also into the vineyard, and whatsoever is right, that shall ye receive.*"

The parables of our Blessed Lord, as indeed all Holy Scripture, have manifold meanings, so that we cannot say, because it means this, it does not mean that, or because it means that, it does not mean this. For all its meanings are parts of His One Meaning, Who spake it, Whose Wisdom, as Himself, is Infinite. Rather, the several meanings which we see, are like the colours of His Bow of Mercy, one hue differing from another, yet all, portions of His One Light, unfolded from It, returning into It, seen separately, yet really inseparable; shewn us apart, that gazing upon them, one by one, we may see what, as a whole, we could not look upon; each reflecting to us some Attribute of His Mercy or His Love. And of these several meanings, two are every where very marked and plain; what relates to the Church as a whole, or to each single soul in it. And in the whole

teaching of a parable, some will belong most to the Church, some to the single soul; as in the Psalms which prophecy of our Lord Himself, some parts belong mostly to Himself, the Head; some, in Him, to us His Members.

The two great meanings of the parable of to-day's Gospel comprise, the one, the whole race of mankind, who have been called by God, from Abel to the end, the other, single souls, one by one. And of these, the larger, the Church, in fact enfolds the other, the history of her single members. The history of God's Dealings with the whole Body is repeated in each single soul. He loves and cares for each single soul, as He doth the whole race of men and Angels. Parts then of the parable belong equally to both; others more especially to the one or to the other. Thus, in both, by amazing Condescension, Almighty God, the Maker of Heaven and earth, vouchsafes to call Himself a Householder, Father of one great family, watching over them, giving them their appointed tasks, promising them their rewards. In both, the Vineyard is His One Church, wherein each, teacher and taught, has his own allotted office, every member, which, "according[a] to the Grace that is given" it of God, performeth that office aright, first or last, is God's instrument to His Own Glory and the well-being of the whole. Every one who, by that Grace, cleanseth his own soul from the weeds of sin, is as really and truly a labourer in it, after his measure, as St. Paul, who, by the Grace that was given him, brought Jew and Greek to "obedience[b] to the faith." And the Reward is in both the same, "the penny" which bore the Image of the King Who giveth it. And what then is this Reward, but that whereof St. John speaketh, "Beloved,[c] now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be, but we know that when He shall appear, we shall be like Him." It is the Likeness of God Himself, traced now faintly upon the believing soul, on those whom He maketh sons of God, yet then given fully, when they shall behold Him "face to

[a] Rom. xii. 6. [b] Rom. [c] 1 S. John iii. 2.

face," and receive and reflect that Unspeakable Glory whereon they shall be admitted to gaze in love.

Other words in the Parable denote different objects, as they are applied to the Church or to the individual soul, yet with the same general meaning. In the one, "the day" is the whole of time, which, long as it is to us, is briefer than a day, in the never-beginning, never-ending Eternity of God; and the hours of that one day, are the different times in which Almighty God, from the morning of the Creation, in Adam, Abraham, Moses, and at the eleventh hour, even "these last days" (as Holy Scripture calls them,) has through His Son Jesus Christ our Lord, called, and still is calling mankind, ourselves, to serve Him. In the other, the day is the whole of life, which is given us for this one end, "to work[d] the works of God, before the night cometh, when no man can work;" and the several hours of the day, are those several seasons of life, in which persons are more especially called, or hear His Call, "Follow Me;" "Son,[e] go work in My Vineyard" i. e. in thine own soul.

Parts, again, of the Parable, although true of both the whole Church and one single soul, have their fuller meaning, as to the one or the other. Thus those words "We have borne the burden and heat of the day" can be said more fully of souls, who have given the spring-tide also of life, their first and best, to God, and ever borne His yoke upon them, although they are true also of the faithful in those elder generations, before Christ came in the Flesh, in that the law was a heavier burthen to them, and they had not so much the Fulness of the Refreshing, Abiding, Indwelling Presence of Christ to sustain them. On the other hand, the excuse of those who stood idle, "Because no man hath hired us," is more fully true of those to whom the Gospel of Christ was, or is, for the first time preached, than it can be of us. We must know full well of ourselves, that we have been oftentimes called, re-called, re-re-called. We were called at our Baptism, by instruction in our childhood,

[d] S. John vi. 28.; ix. 4.

[e] S. Matt. xxi. 28.

through Parents or God's Ministers, by the prayers we were taught, our Confirmation, our first Communion, the early drawings of our inmost souls, terrors, warnings, hopes, deaths of others or of those beloved, our own sickness, God's Pleadings in our consciences, the emptiness and weariness of things present, thoughts of Eternity and Judgment to come, the loathsomeness of sin, the beauty of holiness, the bright light in others, the innocence of children, the sweepings by of time, thoughts of the blissful Company of Heaven, or of the dreadful fellowship of devils.

If we would hear, surely we might rather say, that God calls us, at all times, in all places, by all things, persons, deeds, words, by night and by day, all our lives long, than dare to say for ourselves before God's All-Searching Eye, "No man hath hired us." For so it is; when persons have heard the first Call, every thing calls them. When the heart is awake, every, the lowest, whisper calls it. When it is alive to God, every Work of God, every Gift of God, every Grace of God, in it or in others, every thing done for or against God, every forgetfulness of God, every coarse or idle word it hears, every hard or thoughtless look it sees, calls it anew to God. For when that one thought, "Heaven or Hell for ever," for ever the Blissful Presence, or the loss of the Face of God, Everlasting Love or everlasting hate, is, by God's Holy Spirit, wrought into the soul, every thing may bring it back and forth in us; every thing of sense or spirit may call us out of and above this world of sense, up to its Maker, the Father of all spirits and all flesh, our God.

The world is one great mirror. As we are who look into it or on it, so is it to us. It gives us back ourselves. It speaks to us the language of our own hearts. Such as we are, so doth it speak to us of pleasure, gain, honour, vanity, worldly happiness, or of everlasting rest and peace, out of itself, in God. Our inmost self is the key to all. Our ruling thought or passion, the thought or love, that is, which has the mastery of us, and governs us, and occupies our soul, is touched by every thing around us. In grief, all

things alike, the most joyous or the most sorrowful, suggest to the mourner thoughts of grief; yea, joyous sounds and sights speak mostly, most heavily to it of its own heaviness, or of the absence of the lost object of *its* love. Self-love sees every thing as it bears on self; love of pleasure or of gain looks on all, as it may minister to its pleasure or gain, or to envy those which have what it has not. The heart where God dwelleth, is by all things called anew to God; His Blessed Presence draws it by Its Sweetness: or His seeming Absence by the very void, may absorb it yet more, by the very vehemence of longing, into Himself.

It matters not what things are. Things like or things unlike; things Divine or things devilish; the obedience, order, growth, harmony, beauty of nature, or the disobedience, disorder, decay, discord of man, and the loathsomeness of sin; sounds of harmony, which echo, as it were, the Choirs of Heaven, or sounds of discord, hatred, blasphemy, bad words uttered by the tongue, which "is set[f] on fire of hell;" things good, by their loveliness, or things bad, by their dreadfulness, draw the soul upward to God, or drive it onward, lest, like them, it lose Him.

Every thing preaches Eternity to the awakened soul. All love of gain it sees, preaches of Him, the True Riches; all disquiet "about many things," of Him, our Only Rest; all seeking after pleasure, of Him, the Ever-Flowing Torrent of Pleasure; all sickness of soul and body, of Him, our soul's Only Health; all things passing, of Him Who Alone abideth. Perhaps no place may more preach to the soul the vanity of all things beneath the sun, and the Verity of Him, the Eternal Verity, Whose and of Whom are all things, as the vast solitude of this great, crowded, tumultuous city,[g] "full of stirs,[h]" where "all things are full of labour; man cannot utter it; the eye is not satisfied with seeing, nor the ear filled with hearing,[i]" where well-nigh all countenances or motions are full of eagerness, anxiety; all bent on something, seeking, but finding not, because

[f] S. James iii. 6. [g] London. [h] Is. xxii. 2. [i] Eccl. i. 8.

they are seeking all things out of God, all but Himself, except when, here and there, they at last become very emptiness, because they know no more what to seek or find, but have lost themselves.

But, chiefly, we know, Brethren, in our inmost selves, that whether we have obeyed the Call, first or last, or, if any are even yet disobeying it or hearing it listlessly, obeying it for awhile in solemn seasons, and then forgetting it, or thinking they obey it when untempted, and then anon, when the temptation comes, ever anew disobeying, we know that we have been called manifoldly, perhaps our whole lives through. All perhaps can recollect when, in their childhood, some Sermon or deep Scripture words touched them, or some grave look or word of parents; or they felt ill at ease, or their soul yearned for something better than this world's poor fleeting vanities; or they felt that within them, not made for this world, which could not rest in it, but soared up and up, as though it would find Him from Whom it came, Whose it is; or they were affrighted within themselves, at thoughts of Judgment; or they were inwardly bidden not to put off turning to God with their whole heart. God adapts His Calls to each several soul. He calleth gently or in Awe; in Love or in some form of displeasure; quickening or checking us; within or without, directly or indirectly, in the secret chambers of the heart or "in the chief place of concourse," "in the openings of the gates," "in the city," "Wisdom," that is Himself, "uttereth Her Words," "How long, ye simple ones, will ye love simplicity, and the scorners delight in their scorning, and fools hate knowledge? Turn you at My Reproof; behold, I will pour out My Spirit unto you, I will make known My Words unto you.[k]" All things stand at His Command; all hearts are in His Hand, Who made them, and for Whom He made them; all things may be the channels of His Holy Inspirations; all times may be seasons of His Grace; all words may convey His Voice to the soul. As "all things

[k] Prov. i. 21-23.

work together for good to them that love[1]" Him, so may and do all things call us to love Him. All things have, in turn, called to our souls; all, nature, the world, grace or sin, shame at our folly and our very misery, have repeated His Words in our ears, "Why stand ye all the day idle?"

And yet, if any have neglected or but half heard these manifold Calls, what could we say when some louder Call struck through our inmost soul, and we saw perhaps our whole task not only unbegun, but so marred and tangled that we scarce knew where to begin it? What, when we find our whole vineyard not only unplanted with the choice Vine of God, and bearing no fruit of Grace to Him, but, like the vineyard of the slothful, overgrown with the briars and thorns of our sins; the stone wall, wherewith God fenced it in, broken down, so that the foxes of the desert, even the wily spirits of evil, spoiled, at will, the clusters which we should have borne to God! Well has it been, and only of the Mercy of God, Who withheld the tempter, and gave not our life into his hands, that "the boar out of the wood" did not "root it up," and "the wild beast of the field devour it![m] How could we, when awakened, by the Voice of God, to survey in His Aweful Presence, this waste we had made in His Vineyard, our own souls, and to answer His searching question "Why stand ye here all the day idle?" how could we dare to say, "Because no man hath hired us?"

There is, indeed, a very false and soul-destroying way, in which men do so answer, and cast their own sins and evil upon Him Who made not sin, the All-Good God; as though the fault was not in themselves who obeyed not the Call, but (it is sad to repeat such words) with God Who called not loud enough (so to speak) and constrained them not to hear. And so people "stand all the day idle," awaiting what they speak of, as an "effectual Call," a Call which, without any effort of their own will to hearken or to follow it, should at once remove them from the power of Satan unto God. Truly of the Grace of God alone is it, that any Call is "effectual;" yet these would be saved without their

[1] Rom. viii. 28. [m] Ps. lxxx. 13.

own wills, without the trouble of even yielding their own wills to the tide of God's Grace. And so they say they are not "called," because they have no heart to answer. As though their whole state of mind were not one unceasing Call of God to them to turn to Him; as if all doubt about our state were not God's Merciful Call to come with our whole hearts to Him, in Whom Alone is safety; all our restlessness one Call to Him, in Whom Alone is Rest! What further Call can there be for us, if we know that Heaven and Hell are both awaiting us, before our feet, and that to come to Christ is our only Refuge, to obey Christ, our only sure Hope, to seek after Christ, the only way to find Him, and He hath said, "Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you."[n] If we will not ask, how should we have? If we do ask, then, as God is True, we shall have.

And yet there must be some way in which those words shall be true of individuals also; and their meaning may be this, not that *we* have not oftentimes been called, not that *we* can plead for ourselves, that "no man hath called us," but that when, at last, we do obey God's Voice, He, of His Infinite Mercy, doth regard us as though we had never been called before; He passeth by all our neglects of His former Calls, and looks upon us now, only as we desire to be, obeying Him, labouring for Him. As though, when that Aweful Voice thrilled through us, "Why stand ye here all the day idle?" He would temper it with Words of Comfort; "Be it that ye have not yet been called, I forget and blot out all your past 'sins, negligences, ignorances;' ye are called *now;* ye hear the Call now; 'go ye also into the Vineyard;' it is the eleventh hour; 'the night cometh, when no man can work;' work *now* for Me earnestly, as ye have heretofore been negligent, or have laboured for the wind, or have even toiled in sin, and 'whatsoever is right that shall ye receive.'" And like to this does He speak, in that other Parable of His Vineyard, of the son, who when bidden

[n] S. Matt. vii. 7.; S. Luke xi. 11.

"Go work in My Vineyard," said shamelessly to his Heavenly Father "I will not; but afterwards he repented and went." What saith He of him? Does He upbraid him? Does He call his sin to remembrance? Doubtless the son never forgot so grievous a word, said to so Good a Father. But what saith the Father, our Lord? "Whether of them twain did the Will of his Father?" What? all blotten out? all forgotten? that bold, hard word and act, "I will not," quite effaced, and nothing remembered but that he afterwards "went?" nothing said of him, but that he "*did* the Will of his Father?" Well may we scarce believe for joy, Brethren; well may we be amazed at the Flood of the Divine Mercy, which seems to be poured in upon us, sweeping away all the defilements of the soul in our past lives, blotting out of His Memory all those bitter, painful memories over which we sorrow, and which, for love of Him, we would from our inmost hearts had never been.

And this is what God says elsewhere,[o] "None of his sins that he hath committed shall be mentioned unto him: he hath done that which is lawful and right; he shall surely live."

To count on this beforehand, were indeed to sin with a high hand, and make God's Mercy minister to sin, and bring on ourselves damnation. Yet God does hear that deepest desire of our hearts, when we would return to Him, that we might, as it were, begin anew, be separated, in a degree, from our former selves, be new labourers, new called, new men, anew placed in His Vineyard, to serve Him, with "a new heart and a new spirit.[p]" He looks not on what we have been, but what we are, or desire to be; not on the decay of the past, but on the newness of heart which He gives us; not on our marrings of His Work, but "on the Face of His Christ,[q]" in Whom He would recreate us, "in Whom He is Well pleased."

And so He bids us, as it were, anew, "Go, work in My Vineyard, and whatever is right I will give you." He pro-

[o] Ez. xxxiii. 16. [p] Ez. xviii. 31. [q] Ps. lxxxiv. 9.

mises not to us, as to those first labourers, a certain hire. Even while He would wholly restore us, in His Mercy, He would keep in us the humility of penitents. He seemeth to tell us thus, that we have forfeited our claim, that we must labour on in faith, and hope, and confiding trust, making no bargains, as it were, with Him, looking for nothing again, but what He of His Free Bounty will give us. But so will He give us, not what we could dare to ask or think, but "what is right;" not "right" with regard to us, or any poor claims or demerits of ours, but right in His Sight, Whose "Mercy is over all His Works," right for Him Who "doth what He will with His Own," Who is not stinted to any measures of proportion, but giveth us out of the Largeness of His Love; not what is "right" for us, but for Him in Whose Right we receive what we deserve not, even His, Who gave up that which was His Right by Nature, and "emptied Himself," that, what is His Right, we might receive. This is our very hope, and trust, and gladness in our toil, that we labour, not with any calculating spirit, or to set up for ourselves any claim with God; the rewards of desert were finite; the Reward of Grace is Infinite, even Himself, Who hath said, "I am thine Exceeding Great Reward.[r]"

Yet, often as He calleth us, He calleth us by an ever present Call. He goeth indeed far beyond His Promise in His Word, or His Deeds even, when He Himself dwelt among us. Then we hear not of a second Call. We hear no more even of one whom Jesus once loved, who had done much for duty to God, but who, when called nearer to Him, and to higher fellowship with Christ, the sharing of His Poverty and His Cross, though "sorrowful," still went away from Him. We hear nothing of labourers, who, being called, refused; we are not told that those called at the eleventh hour had been before called, at the third, sixth, ninth, and had refused; or that any who drew back, having been called, were again called. Much less is an eleventh

[r] Gen. xv. 1.

hour promised to those who refuse to hear now. "*Now* is the Day of Salvation.[s]" There is a last hour of Grace to the soul; no one knows when! We must never despair of it for others; we must ever act ourselves, as if it were our last *now*. We know not what we may not forfeit, when we hold back from any Call to greater strictness, or deeper inwardness, or to sit looser to the world, or part with its hopes or pleasures, or draw closer to our Redeemer's Side or to His Cross. We know not whether we may not forfeit all, even our own souls. It is thought to have been shown to one dear to our Lord, where she would have been in Hell, had she not obeyed the Drawings of His Grace. We risk all. Obey we, though trembling, and we know not what future Calls may not be wrapped up in that one Call, what Store of Grace may not lie, pledged to us, in that one Grace; what Treasures of the Love of God may not be opened to us, by receiving into our souls that Love, wherewith He now draweth us. Draw we back, and we know not into what depth of unlove, nay, into what depth of sin and Hell we might not sink! For what may not be comprised in that one Word, "If any man draw back, My Soul shall have no Pleasure in him?[t]"

And so now, in the Vestibule of this Solemn Season, the deepest Season of Grace in the whole year, in which we would, day by day, fast with our Lord, that, what is to us the medicine of sin or the token of unworthiness, may by His Holy and Meritorious Fasting, be sanctified, the Church tells us anew the blessedness of obeying His Call. He calleth us apart from the world, to live with Him, at least in the stillness of the heart, and subdued affections, and chastened will, and a lowly hatred of ourselves, and humble faith, and penitent love, that so we may, at the close, die with Him, be buried with Him, rise with Him, ascend with Him, yea, He again descend to us, that He may dwell in us by His Spirit. He Who accepteth the "cup of cold water" given to His, in His

[s] 2 Cor. vi. 2. [t] Heb. x. 38.

Own Name, calleth us to these petty self-denials, to hallow them by His Grace. He calleth us to deny the body, that He may feed the soul; to retire, for a time, from the pleasures of the world, that He may speak to it "good Words and comfortable Words;[u]" to think how we may empty our souls of vanities, that He may fill us with His Goodness. He calls us to deny ourselves, that, for our decayed selves, He may give us Himself.

If we have held back aforetime, let us not hold back now; if we have stood still, now "run we so, that we may obtain.[x]" If we have for ten, twenty, thirty, forty, years, yea, to the very eleventh hour, "stood all the day idle," go we now at last into His Vineyard. If any have even left His Vineyard, having been called to it, yet now, at last, in the Name of God, and in His Grace and Strength, return. He could make even the last first. No degrees of acceptance are closed by any degree of past forgetfulness, so thou labour now. We cannot undo the past, but God can, and will efface it. We cannot recover our lost hours, wherein we stood idle, but God can crowd into this last hour, in His Will and Good Pleasure, the duties of a whole life. If we turn with our whole hearts, He can make us equal to those who have "borne the burthen and heat of the day." To think of offering to Him the dregs of life, or any thing short of all we have or are, our souls and bodies, our time and being, beforehand, is robbery, thanklessness, withdrawal from Him, keeping back part of the Price of His Blood. To offer to Him the very dregs of life, when it is all we have to offer; to offer our decayed, defiled, lifeless selves, to be His, when all the earliest and best is gone, is an acceptable gift to Him, Who bade, "Gather up the fragments that remain, that nothing be lost;" is what He vouchsafes to call His Own sacrifice. "The sacrifice of God is a troubled spirit; a broken and a contrite heart, O God, shalt Thou not despise.[y]" God, Who calleth us, Himself giveth us the strength to obey His Call. Life is short, the way long.

[u] Zech. i. 13. [x] 2 Cor. ix. 24. [y] Ps. li. 17.

Yet He Himself, Who calleth us to strike more and more into the narrow way, will be, Himself, the Way to us. He Who is with us now to call us, will be ever Present with us, in all whereto He calleth us. "The gifts and calling of God are without repentance.[z]" All in His Purpose and Love, every degree of Grace and Glory, lies wrapped up in His next Call. All Abraham's giant faith and obedience lay in that first Call. All St. Paul's good course and the Life of Christ within him, lay in those first words, "Lord, what wilt Thou have me to do?[a]" All Eternity of Bliss and the Love of God will, through His Grace, forecoming, accompanying, following, lie in one strong, earnest, undivided, giving of thy whole self to God, to do in thee, through thee, with thee, His Gracious, Loving, Will. For He Who "lovedHis own, loveth them unto the end."

He calleth thee *now;* He calleth thee, that in death He may again call thee, to place thee near Himself; He calleth thee, that He may save thee from the pit where His Voice is not heard, to place thee above the stars, with Cherubim and Seraphim, there to sing everlastingly, "Holy, Holy, Holy." He calleth thee, that He may retrace on thee the Image which the Ever-Blessed Trinity deigned to trace on the soul of man, when of him They vouchsafed to counsel, "Let us make man in Our Image, after Our Likeness;" which, defaced by the fall, They, in Baptism, retraced upon thee, when Their All-Holy Name was again pronounced over thee; which thou, by every spot of wilful sin, hast anew defaced, perhaps well nigh effaced.

No outward Gift is it, for which He calleth thee, which He hath promised thee. He calleth thee to Himself, that He may give Himself unto thee. He calleth thee to give up all which is not He, that He may give thee all which He is. He calleth thee to give thee His Likeness. What? Yes! to make thee like Himself, like God! This is the One Gift of Eternity, "we shall be like Him; for we shall see Him as He is.[b]" Like Whom? We may well ask.

[z] Rom. xi. 29. [a] Acts ix. 6. [b] 1 S John iii. 2.

"Like Him." Imagine to yourself All Which God is. Thou dost not yet know, what He has in store for thy nothingness. For it hath "not entered into the heart of man, to conceive the things which God hath prepared for them that love Him.[c]" This only we know, that He Himself will be our Portion. He Himself hath said, "Son, all that I have is thine." All the treasures of the Wisdom, and Goodness, and Sweetness, and Power, and Knowledge, and Holiness, and Love of God. He saith, "All that I have is thine.[d]" He giveth it to thee, not to be held as an outward thing; not to *have*, as it were, created knowledge, or wisdom, or love. This were a small thing for the Love of God. But God will be Himself All in all. Thou shalt know with His Knowledge, be wise with His Wisdom, be holy with His Holiness. For the Blessed shall be like Him, because they shall see Him; and they shall see Him, because He shall have cleansed their hearts to see Him; and, being like Him, they shall be fitted to receive Him: and He, the Fountain of all Good, shall overstream them with the Torrent of His Pleasure, and enfold them and fill them with His Love, and irradiate them with His Light. Their being shall be His Being, and they shall be themselves, only to be not themselves, only that there may be beings, to be ever filled with the Thrilling, Pure, Holy, Exstatic Love of God. They shall be out of themselves in the Absorbing Love of God, and God, in His Boundless Love, shall dwell in them.

Such is the Hire which God offereth thee. What were it, could Satan offer thee not this earth only, but countless worlds? Things out of God may take thee up; nought but God can fill thee. For this He calleth thee. Give diligence at last "to make thy Calling and Election sure.[e]" He calleth thee, "Son, give Me thine heart;[f]" and He will give thee His, His Own All-encompassing, Unencompassed Love. Will ye withhold any longer what He asketh, when He will "withhold" nothing of His Own Almighty Goodness from thee, if thou, through His Grace, "live a Godly life?[g]"

[c] 1 Cor. ii. 9. [d] S. Luke xv. 31. [e] 2 Pet. i. 10.
[f] Prov. xxiii. 26. [g] Ps. lxxxiv. 12.

Were it not bliss enough in itself to lead "a Godly life," a life according to God? For it is the First-fruit of His Love, to live through God. But now He giveth thee "Grace for grace,[h]" Love for love; He giveth thee Love, that He may open to thee the whole Treasure of His Love. He giveth thee Himself, in measure here, that He may give thee Himself, without measure, without pause, without end, one Everlasting, Unminished, Unchanging Joy. He Who dwelleth in the Bosom of the Father, He Who left His Father's Bosom to become Man, and die for thee, He Who hath ascended up where He was before, hath said, "Where I am, there shall also My servant be.[i]" Lord, give us grace to love Thee, to serve Thee, die to ourselves and live to Thee, that we may die in Thee, and live in Thee and with Thee, everlastingly. Amen.

[h] S. John i. 15.

[i] S. John xii. 26.

SERMON IX.

THE FEWNESS OF THE SAVED.

SEPTUAGESIMA.

St. Matt. xx. 16.

"Many be called, but few chosen."

These are heavy words, Brethren. Of them, as well as of the doom of the wicked, we would gladly be silent, if we dared. We would gladly speak only of the Love wherewith God so loved the world, as to give His Son to be the Propitiation for our sins; the Love, wherewith God the Son so loved us, as to become one of us, one flesh with us, that we might be one Spirit with Him; the Love, wherewith God the Holy Ghost vouchsafes to hallow us, by dwelling in our clay, knitting us into one with God; the Love, wherewith the Co-Eternal Trinity vouchsafed, in Their Ever-Blessed Eternity, to love our nothingness.

But do we then, whose little love is but a spark from that Sun of Love Which kindleth all which loves in all Creation, do we then indeed love one another, better than He Who is Love? Can it be loving to hold back what He, Who is Love, revealed? Or safe for you, or without peril to our souls?

These Words of our Blessed Lord do give the intensest awe and pain of any in Holy Scripture; at least, they render

what Holy Scripture says of Eternal Punishment most fearful, and bring it most near ourselves. For they cut at the root of the very comfort, wherewith so many delude their souls, that God cannot mean to punish so great a multitude; that they are no worse than most besides; have done no more harm; not wasted their talents more; not been more irreligious, or impure, or careless than their neighbours. The poor, who speak most honestly, draw out this in words; they tell you, plainly, this is *their* ground of hope. But is it not that of all, who are not in deep earnest about their souls? Whence is it that, not so long ago, words of Holy Scripture were wrested aside from their real meaning, and that to be "righteous overmuch," was taken as a warning from God Himself, not to be too religious? Whence was it that "pious," or "saint," or (God have mercy) "godly," were used as terms of reproach? Whence is it that, even now, a person who will not content himself with easy ways, thinks it for his soul's good to use more devotion, be stricter with himself, "deny himself," "take up his cross daily" after his Lord, if this becomes known of him, by the mass of Christians, who renounce the world in words but not in deeds, he is made "a proverb of reproach." Whence is it that, whenever our ruder nature is not restrained by forms, and even among the young, not to be ashamed of Christ, amid coarse or finer ridicule, is often one of the sharpest tests by which their steadfast love of Him is tried? All this is not, simply that people think it all hypocrisy or formalism; it *is*, that it shakes the foundation on which they themselves are building. If these, who desire to keep the sayings of Christ and do them, are building on the Rock, then they themselves, with their easy ways, are building upon the sand. Would they dare to speak plainly, it is the one common maxim of all, that Heaven is very easy to gain, that it is even difficult to perish. Would they be content to take the same degree of pains about the very slightest thing which really touches them, nay, about their estates, their very buying and selling, their every-day traffic, their every-day pleasures, that they do about their souls? Would they

keep their worldly accounts, as they do the account of their soul? Would they risk the favour of any one, whose good-will was of any importance to their earthly happiness, in the way they do that of Almighty God? What uncertainty will they not bear, what fickleness! how will they bring all things to bear to gain it; how long will they bear to toil for it, how will their souls hang upon it, how will they feed themselves with the very thought of it, however distant! Patience, endurance, toil, self-denial, all which, endured for God, would win Heavenly Crowns, His Favour and His Love, become easy graces, so soon as the object is one of earth. For Him Alone nothing is done, all is too hard, Who will be the Friend of the soul at once, Who first loved it, in order to win its love.

Would this be the court people would pay to one on whom any earthly good depended? to come to Him, perhaps, once in the week; trifle almost in His very Presence, scarce listen to Him when speaking to them, scarce think of Him when speaking to Him, think of ten thousand impertinences rather than of Him; almost turn their back upon Him, so bent are they on other things! Would this be human love? to give some half thought to the object of love, morning and evening, and then be glad to escape out of its presence, and not enter it again, but that one must, or (not, lose it, for too many, alas! would be very little concerned to lose God) one's self perish! How few would bear with a servant, and what servant would expect to be borne with, if he shewed just the same respect, thought, faithfulness, obedience, carefulness as to his master's will, which most have shewn, or do shew, to the Will of Almighty God, their Maker and their Judge, Who can cast both body and soul into Hell! "A son," God complaineth, "honoureth his father, and a servant his master. If, then, I be a Father, where is My honour? and if I be a Master, where is My fear?"

What does lie at the root of all this intense serving of self, and this forgetfulness of God, but a deep, fixed persuasion that God cannot mean to be what they think so

severe; that He cannot really intend to destroy so many: that although God Himself has said "Thou shalt not follow a multitude to do evil," it must be safe to be with the multitude? And they will bear themselves out by a bold praise of God, as though God would "accept flattering words;" and men who know not what real love is, who never thought of God so as to love Him, and could scarcely pretend that they know what it is to love Him, or that they ever felt it, will say that so heavy dealings are contrary to the Love of God. It is but a few steps further, to deny that Hell will last for ever, or to deny Hell altogether. The principle is the same. It is just as hard to conceive of one soul, or Satan himself, lost for ever, as to believe that any number will, however miserably large.

It is one of those deep Mysteries, which will never be understood, save in Heaven, in the Light and Love of Almighty God. For it may be, that, in Hell, it will be part of the misery of the damned, still to rebel against the Justice of God, as here against His Love and Righteous Will. One only difficulty there is, of which all the rest are but offshoots, "Whence is evil amid the Works of an All-Good, All-Wise, God?" And if man, living in this corner of the Creation, bounded in his understanding, looking but a little way along a little space, be not humble enough to say, "I cannot know, God has not revealed it," there is nothing before him, but to say with the fool, "There is no God." If we shrink back from this, as we must, and believe, and know, and confess, and glory, and think in our inmost souls, that, be this how it may, (we know not, need not to know, cannot know now, wish not to know,) since we know this which alone concerns us, that God is very good to *us*, then we shall go on, and with the Psalmist "Praise God in His Holiness," for "His Mercy is over all His Works,[a]" although we understand not His Dealing with any of them.

There are but two resting-places in the whole range of thought about God; the one a loving, implicit, child-like

[a] Ps. cl. 1.; cxlv. 9.

faith, which, although it understands not, believes every Word of God, because it loves Him, and bends not the Thoughts of God to be as its thoughts, but yields and casts down its every thought to be obedient to the Thoughts of God; the other, entire unbelief, which ends in dethroning God, making God a part of the world, and itself a part of God. All else is only moving in the one way or the other.

It does then concern our whole Belief, not to form our own thoughts of God, or think what is fitting for Him, in the least thing. For if we do, God, as He is, is not *our* God. They who make out, that God is any other than He has revealed, are, though they know it not, Atheists, i. e. without God; for *their* God is, indeed, the work of their own minds, an idol, not God. It is on this very subject, the escape of the wicked from punishment, that God Himself says, "Unto the wicked saith God, thou thoughtest that I was altogether such an one as thyself, but I will reprove thee, and set before thee the things that thou hast done.[b]" And herein too was the humble faith of Abraham shewn, when for Lot's sake pleading so earnestly, yet reverently, for Sodom, "Shall not the Judge of all the earth do right?[c]" He knew not *how*, but folded up all in the thought, that the Judgment of God must needs be right.

And so will ye, too, Brethren, and putting from you all thoughts, "how it can be thus?" think only, reverently though sadly, "hath not He Who is Love, God Who, for Love of us men, became Man, said, it shall be thus?"

Alas! Brethren, it *is* an Aweful, painful Mystery of the Justice of Almighty God, corresponding with the Mystery of His Love in our Redemption by the Infinite Merits and the Death of the Only-Begotten Son. Both were foreshadowed from Paradise; both were revealed, in their depth of light and darkness together, by Him, and in Him. It would seem as though they were inseparable. Without the one, we should presume; as, without the other, despair. The loss of an Infinite Good, must be an infinite evil. An Infi-

[b] Ps. l. 16.—21. [c] Gen. xviii. 25.

nite Remedy implies an ill all-but infinite. We can see that it is very fearful to put aside Love so Boundless. It *may be* a contradiction, that such Love, such light terms of acceptance should be offered, and not entail misery proportioned on those who put them aside. But what I would point out, is the fact, that our knowledge of the Greatness of our Redemption, the misery of those who would not receive it, and their multitude, became known to us, by degrees, together.

Scarcely were the Gates of Paradise closed, with the Promise of Him Who should crush the serpent's head, than the first-born of our fallen race was a murderer! His seed became the mighty of the earth, the discoverers of all earthly wisdom, the corrupters of what remained good in the race of Seth, until "all flesh had corrupted his way upon the earth.[d]" Noah, just and perfect in his generation, and the preacher of righteousness for a hundred and twenty years, won none to take refuge in the ark out of his own family; and the first period of the earth's history, the image of the last, closed with the flood which swept them all away; of the eight souls, for the time, "saved by water," one was a reprobate. Still less was the righteous line seen, in the times after the flood; the first deed we hear of is a deed of sin, entailing a curse on a whole race; the next, the building of Babel, seems a rebellion or faithlessness of the whole world; for we are told, "the Lord did there confound the language of all the earth.[e]" Then all mankind seem cast out of the Sight of God, and all visible traces of the Blessing for Shem and Japhet seem, before Abraham's Call, to have vanished; for his very father "served[f] other gods." Abraham was chosen to be the father of countless multitudes; but what is the immediate history? Race after race is severed off, and the nearest enemies of God's chosen people, Moab, and Ammon, and Edom, and Midian, and the Ishmaelites, who "mightily oppressed the children of Israel,[g]" were the offspring of "faithful Abraham.[h]" How lonely is Abraham in Canaan, and Lot in Sodom! Lot gained none, though he

[d] Gen. vi. 12. [e] Gen. xi. 9. [f] Josh. xxiv. 2.
[g] Judges iv. 3. [h] Gal. iii. 9.

"vexed his righteous soul from day to day,[i]" but his own wife perished, and himself became an outcast from the city which God gave, for the time, to his prayers, "for he feared to dwell in Zoar.[k]" How of the children of Jacob, did all almost conspire against the one righteous! how were all delivered out of the bondage of Egypt, and "all baptized unto Moses in the cloud and in the sea;[l]" but each rebellion swept away its thousands, until, at last, all, save two, left their bones in the wilderness. And yet the Flood of Noah is the very image of the final destruction of the world. What happened to Israel, "was written as ensamples of us," types of us Christians, "upon whom the ends of the world are come.[m]" The history of the Judges is one history of varied rebellions and punishments. When the kingdom was divided, the more part, even the Ten Tribes, fell away into idolatry, from which they never returned; all their kings "did evil in the Sight of the Lord;" in the reign of Ahab seven thousand only had not fallen into the worse idolatry of Baal; on Mount Carmel the Prophet of God stood alone. What do Psalms and Prophets alike say of God's people, whether Judah or Israel, and with them of the whole race of man? "They are all gone out of the way, they are altogether become abominable: there is also none that doeth good, no not one.[n]" What saith God of the chosen city "the city where David dwelt," where was the Temple and the continual Service, which He had chosen out of all the tribes of Israel, "to place His Name there?[o]" "Run ye to and fro through Jerusalem, and see now, and know and seek in the broad places thereof, if ye can find a man, if there be any that executeth judgment, that seeketh the truth; and I will pardon it.[p]" God here seeketh not Holiness, such as He had only, Who Alone was Holy among the unholy; He asketh only just and upright dealing and love of the truth, in one of His whole people, that, for his sake, he might pardon it, and findeth it not. What, again, is the complaint of holy men to God? "Help, Lord, for the godly

[i] 2 Pet. ii. 8. [k] Gen. xix. 3. [l] 1 Cor. x. 2. [m] 1 Cor. x. 11.
[n] Ps. liii. 4. [o] Deut. xiv. 23. [p] Jer. v. 1.

man ceaseth; for the faithful fail among the children of men.[q] They speak vanity every one with his neighbour; with flattering lips and with a double heart do they speak." What is the constant prophecy of Judgment to come? "A remnant only shall be saved.[r]" It is foretold in the name of Isaiah's son; and yet he again, St. Paul says, is the image of us Christians, "the children which God" the Father "hath given[s]" to His Christ. St. Paul again gives this as the sum of the prophecies as to Israel. "Though the number of the children of Israel be as the sand of the sea, a remnant shall be saved;[t]" and again, "Except the Lord of Hosts had left unto us a *very small* remnant, we should have been as Sodom, and we should have been like unto Gomorrah,[u]" the cities whom God utterly overthrew, "suffering the vengeance of eternal fire.[x]" Again, when amid a great forsaking in the midst of the land, a tenth only should remain, even this should again be consumed, and a "holy seed[y]" alone be the hope for the time to come. "A holy seed," "gleaning grapes as the shaking of an olive tree, two or three berries in the top of the uppermost bough, four or five in the outmost fruitful branches thereof;[z]" such are the emblems of those who shall be left. And when that former people were restored from that first desolation, the captivity of Babylon, (again an image of our restoration in Christ), how few, in comparison, even of that one tribe returned, from which our Lord was to be born; and when He came, these were divided in divers heresies; and they who believed in Him, although a great multitude, even "many tens of thousands[a]" in Jerusalem alone, were still but "a remnant according to the election of Grace,[b]" while "the rest were blinded.[c]" What is the very name of Christians in St. Paul, but "the elect," i. e. those "chosen out of" the greater

[q] Ps. xii. 1.

[r] Is. i. 9.; vii. 3.; x. 21.; xi. 11.; xi. 16.; xlvi. 3.; Jer. vi. 9.; xv. 11.; xxiii. 3.; xxxi. 7.; Ezek. v. 10.; vi. 8.; xi. 13.; xiv. 22.; Joel ii. 32.; v. 15.; Zeph. ii. 7.; ii. 9.; iii. 13.; Zech. viii 12.; Rom. ix. 27.; xi. 5.

[s] Heb. ii. 13. [t] Rom. ix. 27. [u] Is. i. 9.

[x] Jude 7. [y] Is vi. 13. [z] Is. xvii. 6.

[a] Acts. xxi. 20. Πόσαι μυριάδες. [b] Rom. xi. 5. [c] Rom. xi. 7.

mass who remained; and of those thus chosen, there is yet a smaller body, which, when the larger part are cast away, shall be "the chosen;" "Many are called, but few chosen." Again, the name by which our Lord calls His disciples, is "a little flock.[d]" He prays for them who are chosen out of the world. They are but as a heap of corn, small, compared to the chaff from which it is sifted.[e] Such is the history before Christ came and at His Coming; before, few were even called, still fewer chosen; at His Coming "His own received Him not.[f]" So many would "not have this Man to reign over them," that St. Paul had to prove that God had not altogether cast away His people, that, in the mass of Israel, there was a hidden number who alone were the true Israel. And what shall be at the end? Our Lord answereth, "When the Son of Man cometh, shall He find Faith on the earth?" and that, "if it were possible, the very elect[g]" should fail.

And what, since His first Coming, has been the history of the Church, which He purchased with His Own Blood? Times of trial bring out what people were before; they draw off the veil. Yet how, in each searching fire of persecution, were those who stood the few; those who fell, a countless multitude. How did each deadly heresy carry off multitudes, and one[h] disputed with the Church for its very being, and long persecuted it! What must have been the inward hollowness, when that impostor, who has stamped his name upon a body, (too many torn from the Church itself, and even now ninety-six millions of our race, the lord and oppressor of the Church far and wide, and almost its successor), seemed for a time to threaten the existence of the Christian name, and hem it in on all sides; with no one plea except the hatred of idolatry! Christians to have become the followers of one, blood-stained and a sensualist! Christians in name[i] to have aided a type of Anti-Christ, because they hated their fellow Christians more.

[d] S. Luke xii. 32.
[e] S. Aug. Serm. iii. 61, p. 456, Oxf. Tr. on S. Luke xiii. 13.
[f] S. John i. 11.
[g] S. Luke xviii. 8.; S. Matt. xxiv. 24.
[h] The Arian.
[i] The Monophysites in Egypt

Of another age, a writer of the Church[k] has spoken, that it seemed as if our Lord were asleep in the boat, and there were none, by their cries, to wake Him.

And what is the picture of the world now, after the Gospel has been in the world above one thousand eight hundred years? Those to whom Christ is yet known, hardly

[k] Baronius A. 900. § i. "We are now at the beginning of the 900th year of the Redeemer, wherewith also beginneth a new century, which, from its hardness and unproductiveness in good, is wont to be called an 'iron' age; from the hideousness of the evils it poured forth, 'leaden;' and, from its poverty in writings, 'dark.' Standing at whose threshold, by reason of the exceeding crimes which, at its doors, it was just now our lot to look upon, we have judged it needful, before proceeding further, briefly to forewarn the reader, lest any weak-minded should be offended whensoever he may see 'the abomination of desolation' in the temple. Rather let him wonder, and acknowledge the vigilance of the Divine power in its protection, since the desolation of the temple did not, as formerly [in the destruction of Jerusalem], follow so great abomination.

§ iii. "For all, whatsoever of old the Church suffered under Pagan Emperors, or fierce heretics or schismatics, or any other persecutor, in comparison of these things, is to be esteemed in some sort child's play, yea, to be reckoned a gain, and accounted a clear advantage, since, by *their* means, the Church herself arose more beautiful, was enlarged, and grew, and was made more glorious, in that, laid low, she even gained an illustrious triumph over ungodliness.

A. 912. § xiv. "What was the appearance of the Holy Roman Church! how exceeding foul, when at Rome courtezans held sway, at once most powerful and most foul; at whose will sees were changed, Bishops given, and (dreadful and horrible to hear) their adulterers thrust into the Chair of Peter, pseudo-pontiffs admitted into the catalogue of Roman Pontiffs, only for the purpose of marking the time! For who could say that such as these, lawlessly thrust in by harlots, were lawful Roman Pontiffs? Nowhere any mention of Clergy electing or afterwards assenting, Canons all choked in silence, decrees of Pontiffs smothered, ancient traditions proscribed, and the old customs in the election of the chief Pontiff, and the sacred rites, and early usage utterly extinguished! So had lust, relying on secular power, maddened and stung by phrenzied rage for dominion, made all its own! Then truly was Christ sleeping in deep sleep, (it seems) in the ship, since while these boisterous winds blew, the ship itself was covered with the waves. He was asleep, I say, Who, making as though He saw not these things, suffered them to be done, inasmuch as He arose not to avenge. And what seemed worse, there were no disciples, by their cries, to awaken the Lord, thus sleeping. All were sunk in stupor. Of what sort, suppose ye, were the Presbyters and Deacons chosen by those monsters for Cardinals, since nothing is more implanted in nature than that each should produce his like? Who could doubt but that they were in all things of one mind with those by whom they were chosen? Who would not readily believe that they imitated them, and followed their steps? Who would not understand that they all wished the Lord was asleep for ever, and would never arise to judgment, never awaken to take cognizance of and to punish their enormities?

§ xv. "Only one consolation yet remained for the pious; that although the Lord slept, yet He slept in that same vessel; in that same vessel, which typifies the

more than three-tenths of the whole human race![1] in each generation six hundred millions are born and die, never, in this life, to know Him through Whom we must be saved; and whom we must leave, in reverent silence, to the Overflowing Mercies of God. The Christian Church rent asunder, and its several portions unloving to one another, powerless against the world, because the fire of its "first love" has

Church, He abode, nor departed from her, and hath ever remained in the Church, wherein (so to say) He is held bound by His own promise, and tied most closely by His own saying—'I am with you always, even unto the end of the world.'"

The same writer speaks of the Roman Pontiffs as "Apostatic, rather than Apostolic." Another, of "a monster, then said to be found, with a dog's head and human limbs," as "a marvellous likeness of the state of those times." (Genebrard sæc. 10. p. 552, quoted by Cave; Hist. Lit. sæc. obscuro.) See again St. Cyprian's account of his times, (Serm. 7. p. 94.); or St. Basil's of his, (Church of the Fathers, c. 7, p. 106, sqq., see also p 90.); or Abp. Agobard, of the ninth, (in Bowden's Life of Greg. VII. T. 1, p. 47,); or St. Bruno, of the eleventh, (Vit. S. Leon. ix. ap. Bowden p. 139). "The world lay in wickedness, holiness had disappeared, justice had perished, and truth had been buried; Simon Magus lording it over the Church, whose bishops and priests were given to luxury and fornication"; and St. Anselm, of our own land, "that Christianity had now almost wholly perished in the many." "Unless the vigour of ecclesiastical discipline quickly meet the evil, the whole land will soon become a Sodom." Eadmer i. p. 39, see Brit. Crit. No. 65, (Life of S. Anselm). So that it has been said—"In truth the whole course of Christianity, from the first, when we come to examine it, is but one series of troubles and disorders. Every century is like every other, and, to those who live in it, seems worse than all times before it. The Church is ever ailing, and lingers on in weakness, 'always bearing about in the body the dying of the Lord Jesus, that the life also of Jesus might be made manifest in her body.' Religion seems ever expiring, schisms dominant, the light of truth dim, its adherents scattered. The cause of Christ is ever in its last agony, as though it were but a question of time whether it fails finally this day or another. The Saints are ever all but failing from the earth, and Christ all but coming, and thus the day of judgment is literally ever at hand; and it is our duty ever to be looking out for it, not disappointed that we have so often said, 'now is the moment,' and that at the last, contrary to our expectation, truth has somewhat rallied. Such is God's will, gathering in His elect, first one and then another, by little and little, in the intervals of sunshine between storm and storm, or snatching them from the surge of evil, even when the waters rage most furiously.'" (Romanism and Popular Protestantism, end.)

[1] Religious Statistics, published by the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel:

Christians (of all sorts, including heretical bodies)	260,000,000
Jews	4,000,000
Mahommedans	96,000,000
Idolaters of all sorts	500,000,000
	860,000,000

waxed cold; decay visible every where, and only amid decay reviving life!

And what is the state of things among us? By the Tender Mercy of our God we may hope that He Who hath given the beginning, will carry on His Work. But, at the very best, we are awakening out of a dreary, heavy sleep. What deadly sin is not well-nigh rife among us? Where are most human souls, there is God least. Where are most souls to be saved, there is every form of death. Where all tempts to Hell, *there* are fewest to call men to escape it. And this is repeated in every crowded city in our land! Our wealth, as a nation, is, as far as depends on us, "the price of blood." Every plan for increasing it exposes men the more to sin, severs them from the Church and all means of Grace and the very knowledge of Christ, to be taught, schooled, tended, possessed by Satan!

Or turn we to the history of single souls. How fearfully common is open degrading sin, which profanes the very Temple of Christ, and still more, what is more deadly, because more secret and less repented! But where is the repentance meet for such sin, or the fruits meet for that repentance? It was said by a holy Bishop of old,[m] "More readily have I found such as have preserved innocency, than such as have performed penitence fitting for their sins." And how is it now, when Christians account it enough repentance to an offended God, if men forsake sin when the temptation to sin forsakes them? Name which we will of those grievous sins of which the Apostle says "they which do such things shall not inherit the Kingdom of God," "the lusts of the flesh," or "variance, emulations, wrath, strife, heresies,

[m] S. Ambrose de pœnit. ii. 10, p. 96, add. Ep. 67, ad Simplician. § 4. "Not to sin at all belongeth to God Alone; to the wise it belongeth to amend and correct his fault, and carry on repentance for his sin. Yet this is difficult in this life of man. For what is so rare as that thou shouldest find a man who should convict himself and condemn his deed? Rare, then, is confession of sin, rare is penitence, rare among men is it to maintain its language. For nature resisteth; shame resisteth. Nature, because all are under sin; and whoso beareth about the flesh is open to sin. So then the nature of the flesh and the inticements of the world resist innocence and integrity. Shame also resisteth; inasmuch as each blusheth to confess his own fault, while he thinketh more of things present than of things to come."

envyings, drunkenness, revellings, and such like,[n]" which holds not its tens of thousands captive? "Liars" God has numbered with those who "shall have their part in the lake of fire;[o]" and yet how do whole ranks never scruple at it, for any momentary end it may serve, or to save some slight shame or blame! Or the covetous? Yet love of gain is men's very idol, the end of all enterprise, the mainspring of action, and their god; so that, even before it was so rife, one[p] said of us, "nothing so slight, but with it men sell their own souls." Or if Dives be the image of self-indulgent luxury, itself at ease, and careless of others' miseries, is not our whole land full of them?[q] How few at this moment think it any call to abate their self-indulgence, or give up any, the most needless, luxury, that tens of thousands, with them, members of Christ, are starving. Not to speak of that every-day frightful contrast of unbounded luxury, and misery which has no bound but death. And where, amid this, is mercy? or where, without it, is the love of God? or how shall we hope for mercy, if we show none? or where, again, are the "fruits of the Spirit, love, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance?" Go where we will, to the streets or lanes of our cities, our places of concourse, our marts, harbours, ships, manufactories, mines, society, high or low; look at mankind, as you will, labouring, or at rest, or in their amusements, on work-days or on what we own as the Lord's Day, in our literature, daily, periodical, popular, scientific, listen to their words, might not the very heathen say "where is their God?" have not the heathen said, Mammon is their god! And have they not said truly, if he is man's god, whom in their acts, not in their words, they choose, serve, toil for, love?

Or if we think of the direct Worship of God, what a handful they who come to these Houses of God at all! and of these, how sadly many come without any earnest purpose, steadfastly to serve God! fewer yet to that Heavenly Food

[n] Gal. vi. 19.—21.
[o] Rev. xxi. 8.; xx. 15.
[p] Dr. South's Sermons.
[q] Preached during the famine of 1847.

without which, Christ saith, "Ye have no life in you.[r]" And yet charity cannot hope that even all these do it with prepared hearts, and that there are not who make the Bread of Life, to them even an occasion of death. Among those to whom our Blessed Lord, in the Great Day, shall say "I know you not whence ye are," shall be, He tells us, some who shall "begin to say, we have eaten and drunk in Thy Presence, and Thou hast taught in our streets;[s]" yea, "many" who shall say, "Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in Thy Name? and in Thy Name have cast out devils? and in Thy Name done many wonderful works?[t]"

And of deeds which seem well done, how much is the work of nature, not of Grace! how much is spoiled by bye-ends; by the love of the praise of men; by other sins, which destroy the Grace of God! And of those who begin well, how many are turned aside!

And we ourselves, if God have kept us or anew called us, what is our past, at its best mostly, but calls half-heard or half-obeyed, endless short-comings, "standing idle in the market-place," if not wasting His Vineyard? If, through His undeserved Mercy, we be saved in the end, are we not, mostly, but the wrecks of what we might have been, gaining the shore after shipwreck, on some "broken pieces of the ship,[u]" the plank of repentance, so that even of the saved it will be true, "Many be called, but few chosen" to those higher degrees of glory and bliss, to which, had they faithfully obeyed His "Call," He would have "chosen" them. Amid all these countless forms of death, where is life? Must we not say with the Prophet, "The whole head is sick, and the whole heart faint?[x]" So that men have taken comfort that half the human race dies before it can well know actual sin, and that so many are taken from the evil to come, before they can destroy themselves.

But what, Brethren? are we then to despond for ourselves or others, because the way is narrow, and few find it? This were the very device of Satan, to slay us through despair, if

[r] S. John vi 53. [s] S. Luke xiii. 26. 27. [t] St. Matt. vii. 22.
[u] Acts xxvii. 44. [x] Is. i. 5.

he cannot lay us to sleep in presumption. This we know, God willeth all men to be saved, willeth that *we* be saved. His Love is wanting to no one, but we to It. God willeth thee to be saved; will thou it also; will it with a steadfast will; will it with a whole heart; will it at whatever cost; and pray Him to uphold thy will, aud thou wilt be saved. Wherever or whatsoever we are, we are encompassed with tokens of His Love. However any of us may have fallen, it is of His Love, yea, and the more any have fallen, a token of His deeper Love, that we are not now in Hell. He is Love. He loved us ere yet we were born; He loved us when He called us from our mother's womb and the waters of Baptism, to be His; He loveth us all still, in that He giveth us life and time of repentance; He will love us to the end, if whatever we have been, however fallen, however forgetful of Him, yea, if it be with any of us the eleventh hour, and we have been "standing all the day idle," yet now that He calleth thee, thou, at last, turn to Him. Obey *now* His Voice; or ask *now* for Grace to obey it; purpose *now*, in utter mistrust of self, yet trembling trust in Him, to break off some besetting sin, to cherish some neglected Grace; ask Him *now*, "Lord, what wilt thou have me to do?[y]" give thyself without reserve into His Hands, to deal with thee, for time and Eternity, as He wills, and do the next thing which, in thine inmost soul, He bids thee, and what thou committest unto Him, He will keep for thee; yea, He will keep thee for Himself!

These aweful warnings are but a token the more of His Love towards us, if we will be warned. He terrifieth us, only that we may take refuge in His Love. He meeteth us in terror if we fly from Him, only that we may turn to Him in love. He affrighteth us, even as a tender parent doth, that we may cling the closer unto Him. All without are terrors and forms of death, that in His Love we may be hushed, and find life and peace. He telleth us, and the Words of Holy Scripture seem full of gladness while they

[y] Acts ix. 5.

tell us, of the "great multitude, which no man could number, of all nations, and kindreds, and people, and tongues," which "stood before the throne, and before the Lamb, clothed with white robes, and with palms in their hands; and cried with a loud voice, saying, Salvation to our God Which sitteth upon the Throne, and unto the Lamb.[z]" He biddeth us, "fear" and "fear not;" "fear Him" and we shall fear nothing out of Him; "fear the Lord and depart from evil.[a]" He Himself saith, "Ye that fear the Lord, put your trust in the Lord, He is their Helper and Defender.[b]" He Himself biddeth them who fear[c] Him, to say "His Mercy endureth for ever."

One only way there is. He Himself telleth us; "strive," while ye are yet on the way. Strive, as those in earnest, as those who have a great prize at stake, even your own everlasting life or everlasting death; seek *now*, not then; now when the door is open, not when it shall be shut against those who have not yet entered in. He Who holdeth out the Prize willeth that we should win It; He doth not look on only, but by His Look giveth courage, and strength, and life. The way looks rugged, only until thou enterest it; its ruggedness is not like the ruggednesses of the world, nor its sweetnesses like the world's sweetness. The way is narrow, but only if thou wouldest carry with thee things which Christ forbids; the Forms along it look austere at a distance only; place thyself at their side, and thou wilt see, they will smile upon thee with a Heavenly Sweetness. The world's broad way narrows in, perplexes, harasses, distresses, slays; Christ's narrow path widens as thou walkest along it; for He hath taught us how to say "Thy Commandment is exceeding broad.[d]"

At a distance self-denial seems hard, for thou seest its outer form, and canst not know how they who deny self, gain the Presence of God. It seems hard to part with things of time, yet only until thou knowest, how God replaces them with Foretastes of Heaven. To fast seems hard, yet only till

[z] Rev. vii. 9. 10. [a] Prov. iii. 7. [b] Ps. cxv. 11.
[c] Ps. cxviii. 4. [d] Ps. cxix. 26.

thou know how God satisfieth the hungry soul. The way of life seems a lonely way, but only till thou know, how to, the lonely Christ places Himself by their side. Hard is it to part with this life's destructive sweetnesses, but only till thou know the sweetness of the Heavenly Manna, wherewith God feeds the inmost soul of those who choose Him. Hard is it to cross our own will, but only till we know the rest and peace of having no will, but only His. Trust thyself really and wholly, but the few first earnest steps along the narrow way, and, by God's Grace, thou wilt never leave it; trust thyself with Him Who First, (as at the holy Season whereon we are entering), trod it for thee, and He will smooth it to thee. Blessed will it be, there to tread, where are the Foot-Marks of thy Redeemer. Blessed there to tread, where the enemy shall have no power to hurt thee; but He will "give thee power to tread on serpents and scorpions, and all the power of the enemy." Blessed to be there, where thy footsteps shall not, as thou goest, gather the mire of this earth, but shall be washed with the Blood of Him Who tracked the way for thee; Blessed to be, where thou shall be borne on His Arms, rest thine aching head on His Bosom, hear within thee His Guiding Voice, and all thine own emotions be quelled and quieted by His Peace.

Never, perhaps, were there times, in which the Windows of Heaven were more opened, God's Calls louder, His Work and Care, in recovering us, as a Church, more visible, His Work and Care for human souls more manifest. He calls us, as a Church, by sorrow and by blessing, by spreading us without and strengthening us within, by giving us "the heathen for our inheritance, and the utmost parts of the earth for our possession,[e]" by enlarging our borders; and woe unto us, if we preach not the gospel.[f]" He is calling us individually, again and again; He is calling the very "dead in trespasses and sins,[g]" to hear His Voice and live.

Oh stand we not all the day idle! trust we ourselves with Him, and He hath said, "A thousand shall fall at thy

[d] Ps. ii. 8. [f] 1 Cor. ix. 15. [g] Ephes. ii. 1.

side, and ten thousand at thy right hand, but it shall not come nigh thee.[h]" Aid we how we may, whom we can, by prayers, alms, self-denial, that His Call reach others also. Our love shall return into our own bosom. "Pray" we "the Lord of the Harvest" to "send forth labourers into His Harvest.[i]" And for ourselves and those we love, fear we not either repented sin or present infirmities, so as to lose courage, and faith, and hope in Him. The more pitfalls surround us, cleave we the closer to Him, our Only Guide. The more the waves assault us, cling we closer to Him, the Rock of our Salvation. Cast we ourselves, our fears, our past sins, into the Infinite Abyss of His Mercies, and as we lose ourselves in Him, we shall find ourselves in Him for ever. If we fear to faint by the way, keep we the nearer to Him Who is our Food for the way. If we fear to be parted from Him, part we with ought, at least offer we to Him, to part from us ought which may keep us from Him. Commit we our way unto Him, and He will bring it to pass. He Who forsook us not when we forsook Him, will not forsake us when we would turn to Him. "Faithful is He That calleth you, Who also will do it.[k]"

Now unto Him "Who hath saved us, and called us with an Holy Calling, not according to our works, but according to His Own Purpose and Grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began, be blessing, and glory, and wisdom, and thanksgiving, and honour, and power, and might, for ever and ever, Amen.[l]"

[h] Ps. cxi. 7.
[i] S. Luke x. 2.
[k] 1 Thess. v. 24.
[l] 2 Tim. i. 9. Rev. vii. 12.

SERMON X.

FASTING.

SEPTUAGESIMA.

I. Corinthians ix. 27.

"*I keep under my body and bring it into subjection, lest that by any means, when I have preached to others, I myself should be a castaway.*"

As the strictness of Lent is a preparation for the joys of Easter, so the Church would not bring us all at once unprepared, upon that strictness, but, in the services of the three preceding Sundays, gives us notice of its approach, and, on the very first, gives us serious warning of our need of it. Discipline of the body is the subject of the Epistle of to-day; suffering, with fasting, of the next; charity, wherewith alone austerity is acceptable, of the third. To-day an Apostle sets forth, in himself, the necessity of self-affliction; on the next, his actual sufferings; on the last, the love wherewith, by God's Gift, he so suffered. To-day, Apostolic awe of failure; then, Apostolic discipline and sufferings; lastly, Apostolic charity.

The whole context sounds very awefully. First he warns, that, as many who seek, but strive not, shall not find, so many shall run but shall not obtain. It is not indeed as in earthly prizes, that while "all run," "one" only "receiv-

eth the Prize." In this our blessed course, He Who crowns is willing to crown not the first only, but the last, not those only who have, from the first, ever run, steadfastly, untiringly, but those who, sluggish at first, have at last been quickened and run. Yet must all run in a certain way; "*so* run that ye may obtain." And then, as one chief difference between this running whereby men shall obtain, and others, the Apostle singles out self-discipline. "Every man that striveth for the mastery is temperate in all things." They whom he singles out for our examples, endured much, deprived themselves of much. An ancient father[a] setting them forth as examples to those looking for a martyr's crown, "they are kept from luxury, from the richer sorts of food, from the pleasanter kinds of drink; they are constrained, harassed, tired. The more they have toiled in their exercises, the more they hope for the victory. 'And they,' saith the Apostle, 'that they may obtain a corruptible crown.'" "Virtue" he adds, "is built up by hardness, by softness is destroyed."

And then the Apostle concentrates this teaching in himself. He had exhorted to a certain kind of running; "so run that ye may obtain:" he had instanced self-restraint, as the characteristic of this running; and then of himself he says, "I therefore so run, not as uncertainly, so fight I, not as one that beateth the air;" not with empty, unmeaning gestures and a show of unreal fighting, but one earnest strife, and that with his body. I deal hardly with my body, strike it severe heavy blows, (so the word[b] means) like those wherewith the countenance is disfigured; and this lest he, who had "fully preached the Gospel of Christ," "the chosen vessel to carry the Name of Christ before kings and the people of Israel," should himself suffer shipwreck, "lest that by any means, when I had preached to others, I myself should be a castaway." He upon whom so much suffering had been bestowed from without, he who was "in stripes above measure; in prisons more frequent; in deaths oft; in

[a] Tertull. ad Martyr. c. 3. p. 154, Oxf. Tr.

[b] Ὑπωπιάζω.

weariness and painfulness; in hunger and thirst; in cold and nakedness;" he knew it to be necessary, over and above to ill-treat and subdue his body, "in fastings often." He "brought it" by voluntary discipline "into subjection," lest it should master him, and he be "a castaway!"

My brethren, these can have been no idle fears; they cannot be the misgivings of a humble and over-sensitive conscience: they have God's Seal stamped upon them, in Whose Word they stand, by Whose Spirit they were written. Strangely mysterious then as it must be, that one so highly in God's Favour, so chosen, so honoured by sufferings for Christ's Sake, so "exalted by revelations," should need, not discipline of spirit only, but subdual of this poor body, it must have been so, since it is written.

Since then the Apostle did not deceive himself in thinking such discipline necessary for himself, we, in this day, must be sorely deceiving ourselves, whosoever think it not necessary for us. We know that St. Paul was spiritual: what he spake, he spake by the Spirit of God; what he did, he did as one "led by the Spirit;" when he went to suffer at Jerusalem, he went "bound in the Spirit;" the words he spake, it was not he "who spake, but the Spirit of The Father, Who dwelt in him." When then he, thus spiritual, relates in words thus given him by The Spirit, what that Same Spirit taught him to do, as an ensample to us, we must have strange thoughts of ourselves and a different mind from that of the Spirit, as many as think these things "carnal ordinances," or that the Spiritual life can be upheld or have soundness without them. Shall we, so poor in attainment as we mostly are, our prayers so languid, our love so cold, our alms deeds so sparing, our bearing of the Cross so faint, not need, what he needed who had been in the third Heaven, whose life was a "longing to be dissolved and be with Christ," whose death was but the completion of his sufferings in life, which made his life one death? *We* need this self-discipline indeed for different ends. They whom God has raised to the height of spirituality, are still beset by the same enemies as we; they are watched by the same Adversary: they tread on the high places of the earth, yet, on the

very account of the height whereat they walk, they need the more humility, lest, looking below whereat they have attained, they turn dizzy. Satan's chief assaults are on *them*. Triumph over them, nay, their very stumbling or halting, were a more blasphemous joy to the Evil One, than the perdition of those who struggle not. And so they need the same arms as we. But if they, so spiritualized, still, as being in the flesh, need this constant warfare with the flesh, how much more such as we, whose victories, it is to be feared, have been so few, our defeats so manifold!

Rather it must be feared, that it is one of the subtlest devices of the Enemy, to persuade us that we may become spiritual, through means merely spiritual; that we can cherish better the things of The Spirit, by neglecting those of the flesh; that we can have the victory over the flesh without fighting against it; that, being in the body, we can transfer the conflict, wholly, to the soul; that we can cultivate spiritual feelings, desires, longings, love, without discipline of the body, which would obstruct them and weigh them down. This self-deceit is not a snare of these times only. It has been practised, on system, before as now; only then by heretics, who, thinking the spirit alone worthy of God, the body, which He also created, all evil, thought it no evil to do all evil with it. It is so not unfrequently now with those, who make spiritual feelings the test of holiness. It will ever be, that they who think themselves more spiritual than the Church, or seek these easier, shorter roads, will find their spirituality to be sickly and carnal, puffed up by some false spirit, rather than borne aloft by the Indwelling Spirit of God.

The end they would attain is right, but not the means. Spiritual Communion with God, spiritual affections, fervor, zeal, contemplation, *are* the ends of our being, the rewards of well-being: without them, life spent in duty is imperfect. The question is not whether they be good, but how they are to be attained; how the eye is to be fitted to see God, whether by gazing only, or by being itself purified, that it may have its Saviour's Blessing and see Him.

Fasting and self-discipline may seem, in these days, a

long, toilsome, circuitous, unspiritual course; yet as it is the lowliest, and therefore likely to be the truest, so it is the only way acknowledged by Holy Scripture. By self-indulgence Adam lost Paradise; by self-denial are we to regain that more blissful Paradise, which by Suffering was purchased for us. For penitent or saint no other course is taught. "Fasting, and weeping, and mourning[c]" did God appoint, that He might "return, and repent, and leave a Blessing behind Him." Through fasting and sackcloth was the penitence of Ahab and Nineveh accepted. David, the Scripture model of penitence, lay on the ground and fasted. The Day of Atonement, the great type of our reconciliation to God, was, from evening to evening, one unbroken fast. "I humbled," says the Psalmist, and we take his words into our own mouths, "I humbled my soul with fasting, and my prayer returned into my own bosom.[d]" Amid fasting for forty days, was it vouchsafed to Moses twice to receive the Tables of the Law, written with the Finger of God, and to Elijah, on the same Mount Horeb, to hear the Voice of God. Amid fasting did Samuel conquer the Philistines,[e] and Esther save her people,[f] and Jehoshaphat obtained a great deliverance, when God's people "knew not what to do by reason of the great company, which came against them,[g]" and Ezra a safe return for the people amid "the enemy on the way,[h]" and Nehemiah the restoration of Jerusalem in its "great affliction and reproach,[i]" and renewed the covenant.[k] After seeking the Lord by prayer, with fasting, and sackcloth, and ashes, was it vouchsafed to Daniel to know of the times of the restoration of the Holy City and the coming of the Redeemer, and of the "bringing in the everlasting Righteousness;[l]" and again to hear "the Scripture of Truth," and the sealed order of God's Providence to the end, and that in the Resurrection[m] he should "stand.[n]" Anna[o] saw at length Him she had so long looked

[c] Joel ii. 12.—14.
[d] Ps. xxxv. 13.
[e] 1 Sam. vii. 5. 6.
[f] Esther iv. 16.
[g] 2 Chron. xx.
[h] Ezra viii. 21.—23
[i] Neh. i. 4.
[k] Ib. ix. i.
[l] Dan. ix. 3.
[m] Dan. x. 2, 3.
[n] Ib. xii. 13.
[o] S. Luke ii. 37.

ST. ALBERT'S COLLEGE LIBRARY

for, the Lord's Christ, after "fourscore and four" years, wherein she had "served God, with fastings and prayers, night and day."

And when He came, He took not away suffering and self-discipline, but hallowed them, uniting them with His Own Sufferings, and giving them thereby efficacy, which, in themselves, they had not. He sanctified fasting by His Example; gave it virtue by His Passion; filled it with His Spirit; and so made it a token of His disciples, and a channel of His Grace. He placed it at the outset of His Teaching; He prefixed it, in His Own Person, to His Ministry; He left it as a solemn Memorial of Himself, as a part of the bridal-dowry of the Church, a mark that we are the children of the Bride-Chamber, now widowed for the time, and in sorrow for His Absence, until we be admitted to the Marriage Supper of the Lamb. "The[p] days will come, when the Bridegroom shall be taken from them, and then shall they fast, in those days." How then are we His Disciples, if we fast not? should we not rather wonder that we do any thing but fast, since all our days are days of His Absence? The whole state of the widowed Church is one mourning for the Bridegroom.

Again, our Lord has taught us *how* we should fast, as well as *how* we should pray and give alms. He bids us, in all alike, seek, not the praise of man, but of God. In all alike, He says, of those who do it for man's sake, "Verily, I say unto you, they have their reward." In all alike, He promiseth, that if done for no by-ends, but only and purely for God, "thy Father Which seeth in secret, shall reward thee openly." All then alike can be done to God; all alike God will reward. All belong to us as sons; all are to be done by us, not as servants, (as under the law) but as children in our Father's House, out of love to our Father. All, our Father beholdeth Unseen; He considereth us as we are doing them; He remembereth them and us, if we do them for Him; all are laid up with Him; for all, He has His Reward in store for those who, in them, seek Him. How can man then put

[p] S. Luke v. 35.

asunder, what our Lord has so solemnly conjoined? Shall men dare to call that an unspiritual service which our Lord taught us to do to God, as our Father? or can we, if we indeed love, venture to neglect that, for which He promised that the Father shall "reward" us? do we slight the Treasures of His Love, which are His Reward? or should we not rather fear that our prayers shall be hindered and be beaten back to the earth, if unaccompanied with self-denying acts, wherewith He hath united them? "Fasting and alms," they said of old, "are the wings of prayer." Our Lord places between them, His Rules for prayer. Will He then accept a maimed sacrifice? Or will our prayers thus fly up straight to the Throne of God? Or how shall a Christian venture to leave that wholly undone, which His Lord vouchsafed to instruct him *how* to do to His Father?

By fasting only with prayer were even Apostles enabled to prevail against some "kind" of devils:[q] amid fasting were Apostles separated[r] to carry on their warfare against Satan's kingdom: by fastings, as by other suffering, no less than "by pureness, by knowledge, by the Holy Ghost, by love unfeigned, by the word of truth, by the Power of God," does St. Paul testify that he approved himself as a Minister of God.[s] And what should we dare to say of our Blessed Lord's Own Fast? Our Church rightly counts it among the Merciful Mysteries of His Life, as well as the Temptation for which it prepared, and beseeches Him "by Thy Fasting and Temptation," "have mercy upon us." Strange Mystery, that it should be fitting that His Sinless Nature should suffer through fasting, the appointed means to discipline our rebellious appetites, or humble ourselves for their rebellion! Strange, that when God, in Him, so consecrated fasting, man should not think *that* a privilege, which was hallowed in his Master and Redeemer! Strange, that when the Spotless Son entered into temptation through fasting, we, sin-stained as we are, impure from our mother's womb, and defiled with all our own added transgressions, should think *that* needless

[q] S. Matt. xvii. 21. [r] Acts xiii. 2. [s] 2 Cor. vi. 4.

for us, whereby the Ever-Blessed Son, as Man, was perfected! Strange that when all, Saints and sinners, Patriarchs, Prophets, Apostles, righteous kings, leaders of God's Heritage, types of the great Mediator, yea, and that Mediator Himself, employed fasting as acceptable with God, persons in this day should think they might neglect or despise it, as a carnal and unprofitable service! Strange would it indeed be, were there any thing strange in Satan's wiles or man's self-deceit!

And yet, after a few years, my Brethren, if God, as we trust, continue to restore our Church as He is now doing, we shall think it strange, that members of a Church who, in her prayers, have besought God to be gracious unto them, as "turning to Him in weeping, fasting, and praying," should not do that for which they beseech Him to be gracious!—that they should ask Him to give them "grace to use abstinence," and not seek to practise it!—that they should plead to their Lord, that He fasted for them forty days and forty nights, and themselves fast not at all, with Him or for themselves. It will seem strange that what nature herself suggests, heathens have practised, Scripture directs, the Church enjoins, whereby Martyrs girded themselves to bear their last witness to their Lord, the whole white-robed army of Saints, (until such, as in these later years may, in their ignorance of its use and duty, have been brought through without it), subdued the flesh, deepened their penitence, humbled their souls, winged their prayers, died to the world that they might live to their Lord,—members of a Church should acknowledge in words, in practice neglect.

But men say, they "fast from sin." Would we did! for to fast is to abstain entirely. There is indeed a spiritual fasting and mortification, which is the end of deadening the body; but are we, then, who would make fasting thus wholly spiritual, so eminent in this sort of fasting which alone we acknowledge? Do we attain the substance so fully, by neglecting what we deem the shadow? Reach we the end by neglecting the means? Be then fasting simply self-denial. They then fast in speech, who never make the tongue the

instrument of evil-speaking, reproaches, unkind, or harsh, or angry words, repeating evil, though true, of a neighbour, exalting self, depressing a neighbour, feeding vanity or contention. They fast with their eyes, who gaze not after the pomps and vanities of the world, look not on what causes sinful thoughts, use not sight to covet the things of others, gratify it not with empty show and vain attire, forbid it to minister to the appetite, self-indulgent with the sight, before they indulge their other appetites. They fast with their ears, who refuse to hear words that do hurt, backbiting speech, tales of evil, idle rumours of others, corrupting language, their own praise. They fast with their limbs, who avoid luxury, and softness, and sloth, and indolence, use simple ways, and are "not slothful in business, serving the Lord." They fast as to money, who deny themselves to give to the poor; as to attire, who use modest apparel; as to eminence, who willingly take the lowest place, and see others first; as to esteem, who in honour prefer one another, and for themselves, long for that honour which cometh from God only; who conceal, as much as they may, their good deeds, looking to the reward from their Father's Hands. In anger, it is to return good-will for hatred, blessing for cursing; in a word, it is in all things to forego self, one's own will, desires, pleasures, longings, hopes, fears, thoughts, acts, to seek, not how to have one's way, but to give up one's way; not how to bend others' wills, but one's own; not how to be first, but how to be last; not how to have the best things, but the worst; it is to desire nothing without us, nothing but God; to have no will but that God's Will be done, not only in and by us, but upon us; to be willing, if He wills, to lose the treasures we have, and have the evils we shrink from: yea, to pray Him to withhold from us the outward goods we think are coming to us and which we most long for, to send us the losses we are threatened with, though they seem to part asunder soul and body, if so He sees best for us.

Are then we who, as a nation, despise the fasting of the body, such proficients in the fasting of the desires, the wean-

edness of the soul? We, who would fain never hunger in the body, except to be filled, do we so hunger and thirst after righteousness? Is our speech withheld from evil, or our very delight to tell and to hear some new uncharitableness? Is our very converse on religion, most of the Goodness of the Lord, or to tell evil of men? The very instruction in this House of God, love we most to profit by it, or to censure it? to take home to our souls what may heal them, or to spread abroad evil of those who deliver it? Are we luxurious or simple, watchful or relaxed, stern with self or remiss, meek towards others or harsh, self-denying or self-indulgent, seeking advancement or content, humble or boastful, fair speakers about the Cross, or do we bear It?

It cannot be otherwise. God has wonderfully blended together our souls and bodies, so that they must ever be in harmony with each other, act upon one another; God drawing up the body to the soul, by giving it the mastery, or man drawing down the soul to the body, by making it the slave of the body, whose lord God made it. Nature herself teaches us that we cannot mourn with the soul and be at ease with the body. How does sorrow furrow the cheek, dim the eyes, make the whole frame heavy and languid and weary, dry up and waste the flesh! Feasting and joy, fasting and heaviness, are by nature and our very speech joined together. When we *do* mourn, dainty meats become loathsome, sweet sounds discordant, fragrant smells oppressive; we refuse our bread, or eat bread of affliction, and drink water of affliction.

And shall we then think that we can reverse this law of our nature and pamper our bodies, fare sumptuously every day, and yet be true mourners for our sins, and be in heaviness for them? "My heart," says the holy penitent, "was smitten and withered like grass, so that I forgat to eat my bread.[t]" Our Blessed Lord sunk for weakness under His Cross; and shall we think to bear ours in buoyancy and fulness of bread? Our Lord pronounces a special blessing on those who mourn, and weep, and hunger, and pronounces woe on those who laugh and are full. Shall we, then, think

[t] Ps. cii. 4.

to join what He has separated, fulness and mourning, be joyous in our bodies, and true penitents in our souls?

Or take we the very words wherein Holy Scripture speaks of fasting, and see how these strange sayings which, to evade an irksome duty, men palm upon their souls, will fit in with them. To fast, men say, is "to fast from sin." What means, then, our Lord's Word, "When ye fast, be not as the hypocrites, for they disfigure their faces, that they appear unto men to fast?" Was the hypocrite's fast a fast from sin? or did the Pharisees mean that "John's disciples fasted often" from sin? or our Lord, that His disciples should not fast from sin while His Blessed Presence was with them, but that they should then fast from sin, when He should be taken away? or when St. Paul joins "fastings often" with "cold and nakedness," means he spiritual fastings and spiritual cold and nakedness, chillness of heart, and nakedness of the Robe of Righteousness? Or meant he, again, little self-denials of dainty meats now and then, in the midst of plenty? Was this the ill-treating and subdual of his body, this the hardship, whereby he would avoid being "a castaway?" Or which other meant he of our easy ways, by which we would avoid the sterner duties of God's law, which cost us something?

My brethren, it shames one to have so to speak, to have to go about to prove, in a Christian Church, what the whole Church, from the Apostles until these last days, ever practised; to prove, in this age which has "Search the Scriptures" for ever on its lips, what lies upon its very surface, what is on the very way-side, did not the fowls of the air, even the evil spirits, carry it away and devour it. In other times people have deceived themselves *how* they would fast, and to what end, and have fasted for the praise of men, and indulged themselves in one way, while they denied themselves in another. The arch self-deceit was reserved for these days; for Christians to deem themselves spiritual, for neglecting the letter of their Lord's Words, for the religious to use the irreverence of the profane; for some who really wish to reverence God's Word, to neglect whatever in it contradicts

their own thoughts; for some who "make their boast of the" Gospel, "through breaking the" commands of the Gospel, to "dishonour God;" for some who really wish to love their Lord, to decry, under names of reproach, what He said His disciples should do.

It is high time, my Brethren, that we should shake off these irreverent, careless ways. Ye that would serve God, tamper not thus with His Holy Words. Put not yourselves off with words and vain excuses, "wood, straw, hay, and stubble," which will not stand in that Day, in which "every man's work shall be tried with fire." Shrink not from God's Word, or from seeing that it does impose a duty upon you, at first a hard, but afterwards a joyous duty; that it has a yoke, although, in your Saviour's Strength, a light one. Venture to look into God's Word, and trust your ways to Him, and He will teach you that the outward ordinances which He gives are spiritual, for He accompanies them with His Blessed Spirit; that His labours and toils are rest, for He is the Rest of the weary.

Rather, if this be any one's first Lent, I would give some simple rules, which might smooth some difficulties. Let it be an act of obedience. A sacred Poet[u] of our own says, "The Scripture bids us fast, the Church says now." Thus shall we do it more simply, not as any great thing; not as of our own will, but as an act of obedience; so will the remarks of others (if such there be) less disturb us, as knowing that we are doing but little, and that not of our own mind. But little in itself, it is connected with high things, with the very height of Heaven and the depths of Hell; our Blessed Saviour and our sins. We fast *with* our Lord, and *for* our sins. The Church brings us nigh to our Lord,[x] Whose Fast and the merits of Whose Fasting and Passion we partake of. We have to "humble our own souls with fasting" for our own sins. Remember we both. Review we our past lives; recal to our remembrance what chief sins we can; confess them habitually and in sorrow, with the use of the Penitential Psalms, and especially that daily medicine of the penitent

[u] G. Herbert. [x] Collect for First Sunday in Lent, and Litany.

soul, the fifty-first. Fast we, in token that we are unworthy of God's creatures which we have misused. Take we thankfully weariness or discomfort, as we before sinned through ease and lightness of heart. And thus, owning ourselves unworthy of all, think we on Him, Who, for us, bore all, so shall those precious Sufferings sanctify thy discomfort; the irksomeness shall be gladsome to thee which brings thee nearer to thy Lord.

Then for the mode of fasting, begin gently, it is for the most part the most humble. God leads us in all things step by step. They who begin impetuously, do it mostly overconfidently, and so have often soon grown weary of hardness which they sought to bear in their own strength. We have some time before us. One object of our Lenten fast is a long continued discipline. Till thou knowest thine own strength, it is best to make a rule week by week, which may be relaxed or tightened as each is able to bear. Some things which health requires not, we most naturally give up for the whole season. In health itself, though care is to be used, God has, upon prayer, to some given strength, who before were unequal. He also gradually adapts the body to fasting. "Nature," says good Bishop Wilson, "does with little, Grace with less." But He will guide each who humbly looks to Him. He will accept the least done in penitent sincerity to please Him, Who only gives value to what is harder. Only let it be real self-denial and a rule; so shalt thou escape caprice and debate with thyself, and He Who rewardeth the gift of a cup of cold water in His Name, will not despise any self-denial even in these lesser things, whereby thou wouldest bring thyself under His training, confess thyself unworthy of His gifts, deny thyself as thy Lord denied Himself, to die for thee, and through thy self-denial minister to the wants of others, as He took upon Him our infirmities, and miseries and sins, and bare them in our flesh upon the Cross, that He might instead make us partakers of His Glory, and Joy, and Holiness, and Divinity. Give to the poor what thou savest by fasting, and to God the time which thou rescuest by the retire-

ment which befits it; so shall charity sweeten thy self-denials, and prayer shall sanctify them, and with charity and fasting shall thy prayers the more ascend before God, offered in love to man and humility to God. And they of our households, who eat of our bread, who of silver and gold have but little, will, cheered by our example, gladly join with us in denying themselves, that they too may with us "deal[y] of *their* bread to the hungry," and partake of the blessings promised to the merciful. Thus joining in fasting and almsgiving those with whom in Christian families we join in prayer, shall we the more be holy households, "acceptable to God through Jesus Christ."

And even the poor, who ordinarily are exempt from fasting, because labour brings down their bodies, and, compared to ours, their life is one fast, still may forego some things which to them are luxuries, that they may fast with their Lord, Who, for their sakes, became poorer than even they, not having where to lay His Head, and humble themselves for their own sins. The very poor might thus shew charity to those yet poorer.

Think not these things valueless or irksome. Ye will be tempted to both. Try them and ye will find them neither, but gladness and a blessing. It is the very character of the Gospel to change every thing, sanctify every thing, brighten every thing. For the Spirit of God sheds over every thing His Holiness and Light; the Blood of Christ purifies our dross and makes it gold, imparts to our worthlessness Its Own inestimable Value. The Cross of Christ changes all It touches. It brought in life for death, holiness for sin, Heaven for Hell, the Love of God for Almighty Wrath. How shall It not change all besides? It makes weakness strength; sorrow, joy; fasting, a feast; sickness, health; weariness, rest; suffering, gladness; loss of all things, to win Christ; loneliness, the Redeemer's Presence; poverty, riches; darkness, light; humiliation, honour; contempt, glory; our broken offerings, acceptable service; petty self-denials, Angelic crowns. For It enables us to love Him Who first loved us,

[y] Is. lviii. 7.

and to those who love Him makes all things an earnest of His Love, all partaking of His Cross health and life. It drops Life-giving Blood from that Sacred Side, on every sorrow borne patiently, and taken willingly, as His gift to His penitent disciples. It gives our blind and maimed sacrifices, if the best which we can offer, some portion of that Death of Value Infinite, which gives Life and Value to all which lives and loves.

Only, while too many neglect all fasting, of body and soul, let us beware that in the humiliation of the body, we fail not to mortify the soul. Fasting, especially in its revival, has its own snares and trials. Satan would make the very means of Grace a hindrance. To some few, he might give high thoughts as though it were some great thing; more he might make ashamed of what is Christ's Cross. He can use against us the weakness of our body as well as its strength, disappoint us as though we reaped no spiritual profit, or elate us at what we think we have; employ our weakness to irritate the flesh which in the end it subdues, rouse the evil tempers which in the end by God's Grace it mortifies, distract us in the prayers, which in the end it wings.

Our remedy is, to wait in patience on our God Do we it not as some great thing, but as a simple duty, and we shall not think much of ourselves or be disturbed by the reproaches of others. Judge we not others who have not been taught it, but conform the rest of our own lives to it. Do we it because we have been taught, and feel that many who have not been taught it are more self-denying than we; explain we ourselves gently to those who ask, "what means this service?" not as though we knew more than they, but that having been taught, in us not to do what we have been taught were sin. Be we the more watchful, lest by any evil temper we bring reproach on what is God's Ordinance; yet be not anxious to see its fruits, for no medicine heals at once, but perform it as a duty and entrust the reward with God.

Especially in this holy season, which gradually deepens until it brings us to Calvary, give we diligence, that it pass not from us without a blessing. Seek we, while we chasten

the flesh, to "chasten our souls" also, "by fasting." We should labour to bring our whole souls and minds in harmony with our fast, in reverent sympathy with Him Whose Sacred Fast we follow, Whose Meritorious Cross and Passion we prepare to witness, and, bewailing ourselves and our sins, to rejoice in Him.

We should, none of us, by God's Grace, go forth out of Lent, as we entered it. So solemn a season of stillness, collectedness, subdual of self, will not pass over us, without the distilling of His Grace, if we seek to gather and store it up within us. Seek we to have some definite aim. If we have never yet examined our whole lives, as a whole, by the rule of God's Commandments, this were a blessed work now; so shall we mourn more really than we ever did before at the season of His Bitter Passion, and, mourning, shall be comforted; yet, first healed by penitence and lowly confession to Him, then comforted. If we have already done this, and so learnt to know ourselves and our besetting faults, seek we in earnest to subdue one. Each fault has some pain accompanying it, which will give us notice of its approach. In whatever degree we have learnt to know ourselves, we know its occasions, the pleas whereby we are wont, at the time, to hide its character from ourselves, when and where we are in peril of it. Unwatchfulness or ignorance of self alone are altogether surprised. God has placed sentinels around us, if we will heed their still, gentle warnings. Watch we the first motions and stirrings of the enemies of our Lord. Give them no entrance. As the case may be, silence them or escape them. Some will die, if only no breath be given them, and they be pent up within. Some we must escape, by quickly taking refuge with the Lord our God. From some we must escape, as out of the mists of this earth, rising, with thoughts of God, into the upper air, and there we shall meet the Light of His Countenance, or some Ray from It. In any case, so soon as the temptation comes, betake thyself to some brief prayer, or some thought of God, which shall be prayer. For forty days thy Saviour was for thee in one unbroken fast, "with the

wild beasts" in the wilderness, and tempted of the devil. Strive thou, for forty days, against any one sin, using what strictness thou mayest, and, by His Grace, thou wilt receive of Him a power thou knewest not before; thou wilt know, in thy degree, "the fellowship of His Sufferings," and wilt be conformed to His Death;" thou wilt "know Him, and the Power of His Resurrection." Thou wilt know what His Might is, for thou wilt know what it is, earnestly and with perseverance, to desire that His Might be put forth in thee and for thee; thou wilt have followed Him, like the blind man on the way, and have cried after Him, and He Who taught thee that cry will hear thee, and say to thee, "Be it unto thee as thou wilt."

"Have I[z] not commanded thee? Only be strong, and of a good courage; be not afraid, neither be dismayed: for the Lord thy God is with thee whithersoever thou goest." "I will not fail thee, nor forsake thee," saith the Faithful and Almighty Lord, thy God."

[z] Joshua i. 9, 5.

SERMON XI.

REVIEW OF LIFE.

LENT.

PSALM CXIX. 59, 60.

"*I thought on my ways and turned my feet unto Thy testimonies; I made haste and delayed not to keep Thy commandments.*"

SUCH is the history of almost all solid conversion. The great destroyer of the souls of men, which throughout the whole world is so widely wasting, is not so much, wilful, deliberate sin, as thoughtlessness. Ripened sinfulness alone is deliberate, with forethought. Most sinners are plunged into sin unawares. Even habitual sinners are "overtaken," as they say, again and again. They are walking at random, with no guard over their senses, no heed to their companions, not looking to their steps, and sin comes upon them, and ere they know it, has the mastery over them. They flee not occasions of sin; trust themselves very near it; Satan, unseen, drives them on; the place whereon they stand is slippery; they fall in. They know not themselves, nor the strength of temptation, nor the deceitfulness of Satan, nor their own weakness, nor the Strength and Help of God; and, while they think they stand, they are fallen. The last act is very seldom in a person's own power. No one, hardly,

purposes to be drunken; few in their first fall, perhaps for many, mean to be wholly impure. And yet any one would say, that it was a very miracle of Grace, if one, on the verge of deadly sin, were stopped and saved.

To sin with forethought is with a high hand to part with the very principle of good, to defy the Majesty of God, and to dare His Almightiness. We should rightly think it a very heavy increase of sin, were any to do it with full forethought and consciousness. We speak of such acts as of unwonted malignity. Deliberate murder makes the blood run cold. Almost all, bad as they might themselves be, think that any who could plan to destroy or lead astray female purity, had a beast's heart and a beast's nature, not man's. Wilful drunkenness would be a revolting extreme of sottishness. No one could come at once to purposed deadly sin. It is not, then, plea enough even before ourselves, (bribed and drugged as people's consciences often are), that the deadly sin was not planned beforehand. Ye may have pleaded this too often for yourselves; when the case is not your own, ye see that the plea will not stand.

Forethought heightens the sin, so much so, that of many sins persons could not bring themselves to think beforehand. They will even blind themselves, resolve not to see, will not look in the face what they are about to do, lest they should not dare to do it, if they saw it. They will not think that they are about to do it, will persuade themselves that they are not, will look away from it, until they are close upon it, and then it is done. Nay, they will again and again begin on the course which ever ends in it, and think they will stop short this time, though they never did before; or they will think of something short of it, in order not to think of the sin itself. Thus, a young person tempted to lie, will resolve not to think whether it will lie or no, until the very moment, that the lie may be told, without steadily thinking on it. People go to rest prayerless again and again, thinking they may say their prayers, without the effort or solemn act of kneeling, although they know how often they have thus fallen asleep, with scarce one thought of asking

pardon, or God's Fatherly care. They will put off duties, although they know that this always ends in their not doing them, because they will not do them, yet dare not say, "I will not." They say, "I go,[a] Sir," and go not.

Or, they will hurry to their sin, as even Judas did to that last sin, which filled up the measure of his wickedness. "He went immediately out," the Gospel[b] says, "and it was night." He could not bear to stay in the Presence of his Master, Whom he would betray; to stay was to be drawn back; so he burst at once the bonds of love, whereby his Lord would have held him, and "went out." And sinners now go forth quickly out of themselves, that they may escape the Presence of God within them, rebuking them. They will sin hastily, impetuously, in order to avoid the struggle of conscience. They will not part with their purpose; yet, till they are quite hardened, it is a pain to sin against their Good God and Father; and so they will not take time to think what they are doing, because it is a torture to think that they are about to do evil, and yet to do it. "It was night," when Judas went out to betray his Good Master. He could not bear to look on his deed. Many sins are wrought by night, that people may hide themselves from themselves yet more than from others. So rare, at least until the heart is seared, and hardened, and inured to sin, is conscious, full, wilful sin. It is the very business of sinners to forget themselves and drown their memory. They hate to be by themselves, lest silence and stillness should force thought, and thought should reveal to them that fearful sight, themselves. Any thing better than to be alone! for to be alone is to be brought before themselves. Any toil or weariness, or wearisome society, sooner than to be left alone! lest, when all is hushed, thought should awake, and God speak through it, and they be forced to hear.

Such wilful ignorance of self is indeed real knowledge. To close one's own eyes against the light, is to see that, against which men shut them. It is no excuse before God; yea, it is man's very condemnation, that he *will* not see, *will*

[a] S. Matt. xxi. 30. [b] S. John xiii. 30.

not hear, *will* not hearken, *will* not understand, "lest he should be converted, and God heal him.[c]" Yet it shows how sorely sin is against the remains of God's Image in us, and His Pleadings in our consciences, and the Graces of His Spirit, that even practised sinners find it hard to sin with their eyes fully open, until, when quite hardened, they glory in it. While man yet feels sin to be an evil, he shrinks from thinking of it, or that he will do it, or has done it; until he is quite blinded, and puts good for evil and evil for good, counts God's Law an evil, his own passions a good or his god. Until then, even habitual sinners blind, deafen, make pleas to, cozen themselves, that what they do is not sin, until they have done it; and then, they strive to forget it.

Since, then, persons come so slowly to full deliberate sin, what is the parent of this mass of sins wherewith we are encompassed? what is it which, day by day, is destroying souls? Thoughtlessness. At first, sinners do not think; then, they will not think: at last, they cannot think. "Let us drive away care, drown care" is the very invitation of sinners to one another, to forget themselves and God, and steep themselves in forgetfulness. The world invites them out of themselves; Satan shews them in his mirror, glories, beauties, enjoyments, for a long time to come; he goes before them, and his flock, "the flock[d] of the slaughter," follow him; he is merry with them, applauds them, echoes their laugh, heightens their feasts, inflames them, makes the wine sparkle and give its colour aright, dances before them, until, in mirth and revelry, and forgetfulness of self, they dance after him, to the brink of Hell. "The harp and the viol, the tabret and pipe and wine are in their feasts," says the Prophet Isaiah;[e] but what follows? "they regard not the work of the Lord, neither consider the operation of His Hands." "The voice of harpers and musicians, and of pipers, shall no more be heard in her," is part of the woe on that great city, the city of the world, Babylon; the revelry whereby the world deadens the soul and would drown the Voice of God. And what is the last end of the

[c] Acts xxviii. 27. [d] Zech. xi. 4; Ps. xlix. 14. [e] Is. v. 12.

world, when "like[f] a snare it shall come upon the face of the whole world?" We know that in the last days "perilous times shall come," and "iniquity shall abound," and men shall be "lovers of their own selves, covetous, boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy, without natural affection, false accusers, incontinent, fierce, despisers of the good, traitors, heady, high-minded, lovers of pleasures more than lovers of God.[g]" Yet our Lord, in foretelling the Day of Judgment, does not mark out any of these, or even any open sins. He warns us against that one sin which shall run through all the rest, "thoughtlessness;" thought (that is) of the things of this life, thoughtlessness of Him their Maker, and of the end of their being, and wherein it should end, in Heaven or Hell. "As[h] it was in the days of Noe, so shall it also be in the days of the Son of Man. They did eat, they drank; they married wives, they were given in marriage; until the day when Noe entered into the ark, and the flood came and destroyed them all. Likewise also, as it was in the days of Lot; they did eat, they drank; they bought, they sold; they planted, they builded;" things of every day, which needs must be every day, yet all, things of time and sense, which men might perform as God wills, but wherein they do forget Eternity and God.

This is the history of most of mankind; a thoughtless childhood, careless youth, too thoughtful manhood; one half of life without thought, the other with misplaced thought; thoughtful of things of time and sense, thoughtless of Him Who made them and of their real selves. What does almost every countenance we see in this vast thronging city, rude or refined, express, but thoughtlessness or a wrong thoughtfulness, a vacant, self-enjoying look, or carefulness about things of this life? So rare is thoughtfulness, that if any look thoughtful, men think he must have some sorrow. To be what Scripture calls "grave," is to have some hidden anxiety or grief. To be a "serious" person is a

[f] S. Luke xxi. 35. [g] S. Matt. xxiv. 12.; 2 Tim. iii. 1.—4.
[h] S. Luke xvii. 26.—28.

name of reproach. To be careful about the soul, is to be fain to be better than others. "Man[1] walketh to and fro in a vain show," an image, shadow, sporting himself with, following after, grasping at, shadows, and himself becoming like them; bearing about him the image of things Divine, himself the image of God, yet by his own acts encrusting, and covering over, and burying that Image with mire and clay, or wearing it off line by line, until there remain only, what shall mark him as a deserter, not what shall be owned by Him Who placed it on him.

We speak of childhood as a thoughtless age. Wherein is its thoughtlessness shewn? They are readily amused by whatever comes before them, live in the present, forget the past, fear not and take no thought for the future, fear not danger although close to them, think nothing will hurt them which pleases them, exchange readily one enjoyment for another, hope that to-morrow will be as glad as to-day, and gladder. Wherein does this their thoughtlessness differ from that of most of their elders, except in innocence and purity, and simplicity, and ready forgetfulness of wrong? What is all their thoughtlessness but what is daily and hourly repeated by their elders? Or do *they* think less of the morrow of this life, than their elders of the One Morrow, which knows no morrow, the Morrow of Eternity? are they more intent on their toys, than their elders on toys as vain and empty, yet less innocent? Are they less thoughtless as to present danger, than their elders as to the ever-present danger of Hell? *They* will be warned not to take what hurts the body; Prophets, Apostles, Ministers of Christ, our Blessed Lord Himself, in His Bodily Presence, His Sufferings, His Deeds of Love, His Words, the pleadings of His Spirit, have and do warn their elders in vain. Wherein are children thoughtless, and their elders not more deadlily?

What is the life of most men, even when free from overt, deadly, sin? What is it, even if they are in some degree engaged in works of their calling, in things in which they might please God, and, through the Blood of their Re-

[1] Ps. xxxix. 6.

deemer, gain Heaven? How very few are they who, in the morning, ever set steadily before themselves the temptations, duties, of the day; in what things they most often fail; wherein they can amend; and form one earnest purpose to give themselves during the day to God, and shape the actions of the day as shall please Him! How very few enter upon any of their every day trials, (however often they may have failed), with prayer to God for help! How few with any preparation at all! How few even know what some of their chiefest trials are! How few know, except in some half way, that they have even failed at all! Almost every command of God is broken, almost every deadly sin committed, people are covetous, luxurious, slothful, envious, proud, angry, gluttonous, they speak ill of others, or against them, irreverently, vainly; and know not that they have done so. What is almost all conversation almost everywhere, but a breach of the law of love, so that if a person would escape sin, he can hardly speak of all the world speaks of? And yet scarce any even doubt whether they are sinning! Act follows on act, and word on word, chasing one another, sweeping over one another, like wave on wave; and what remains in the memory? How few call themselves really, evening by evening, to any account! It were not too much to say that many or most know more of the state of others' souls than of their own, and care more to know it, "curious[k] to know the lives of others, slothful to amend their own."

Yet what should you think, brethren, of one who left his house or any thing he *does* value, as unguarded as men are daily content to leave their souls? What of one who took no more account of his worldly affairs, day by day, or year by year? What of any who awaited with just as much care, the inroad of enemies, who would wreak on you, your wives and children, the horrors we read of in Holy Scripture? And is then *that* thought with regard to the soul, which would be thoughtlessness as to body, or estate? is *that* watchfulness as to the deadly enemy of our soul, which would be recklessness as to bodily foes? are Heaven and

[k] S. Aug. Conf. x. 3.

Hell, God and Satan, everlasting joy and woe, God's Promises and His Threats a dream? or are men thoughtlessly dreaming on to the very brink of Hell?

And so, in His Mercy, lest, with Dives, we should awake too late in torments, God breaks in upon our dream, and the first step in turning back to Him, is that He turns men back into themselves. "I thought on my ways, and turned my feet unto Thy testimonies." Before this, then, he had not thought on them. "My ways;" there are, then, divers ways, ways which are not right, ways which are "clean in a man's own eyes,[l]" but not in His Who trieth the hearts; ways which "seem right unto a man, but the end thereof are the ways of death;[m]" a broad, easy, way, whereat, our Blessed Lord warns us, many go in, but it "leadeth to destruction.[n]" And so this man of God, lest he should be on some of these evil ways, took account of his ways; and well was it, and of the Grace of God, for he adds, "and I turned my feet unto Thy testimonies." Before, then, they were not so turned. He speaks not only of striking nearer and closer into the very centre of the narrow way, lest, if we remain on its edge, we slip unperceived out of it; but of being altogether out of the way. "I turned," (it is the very same word as "conversion" or "turning unto the Lord our God") "I turned my feet *unto* Thy testimonies;" they were then, before, turned other ways, and out of the ways of God's Law, since they were now to be turned unto them. And yet more, he adds, "I hasted, and lingered not to keep Thy commandments," as one who had, for a long time, perhaps his whole life, been wandering unawares out of God's ways, and now found himself in a far country, and much way to recover, and a brief time to do it, and the night perhaps at hand, "in which no man can work," but where he should be found in death, there he should awake to Judgment. The holy words contain yet more, "I thought," or, more fully in God's Own language, "I took account of,[o]" "reckoned up," "calcu-

[l] Prov. xvi. 2.
[m] Ib. xvi. 25.
[n] S. Matt. vii. 13.
[o] חִשַּׁבְתִּי

lated" "my ways;" for our ways, although leading in one direction, are many; there are as many ways as there are acts, or passions, or temptations; and he "reckoned them up" and "took account of" them all, whither they were all leading, to turn them all and his whole self into the way of God. He would, henceforth, not try to walk on two ways, as so many do, unwilling to part wholly with God, or yet with their sins; to walk, as it were, to Heaven with one foot, and to Hell with the other; for what else does *he* try to do, who would wilfully reserve part of his obedience, in some things serve God, in the rest himself? He wished henceforth to give himself wholly to God, and so he reviewed all, took account of all, lest anything should escape him, and he slip back to evil. And so also, he counted them up before God, as it was said before, in this same Psalm, "I have acknowledged my ways, and Thou heardest me: O teach me Thy statutes." "I acknowledged," and more exactly yet, "I recounted[p] my ways;" "recounted" them there, as he "accounted" them here; recounted, one by one, his own ways, in sorrow before God. "I recounted *my* ways;" and what else are "*our* ways" but our sins? for they are all the ways of our own wilfulness, and any good in us is not ours, but God's. As a father[q] briefly says, "I confessed *my* ways. Thou heardest, forgavest, effacedst them; teach me *Thine*, not to know them only, but to do them."

Such, brethren, is the way of all solid conversion to God. He chooses different ways of turning us. He is very patient with us. Some turn faster, some slower; some were not turned so far away, or for so long a time, or did not so wholly turn their backs upon God; some have, perhaps, scarcely perceived the steps whereby they had been brought back. Yet this is the history of almost all who have been deeply turned to God at all. God met them in their way, where they were going. He, in Whom we are, met them mostly in merciful displeasure, as they turned from Him, that they might turn to Him, and find Him in love. He

[p] סִפַּרְתִּי, ver. 26. [q] S. Aug. ad loc.

meets us thus, in sickness, sorrow, failure of our hopes, loss of those we love, aching of the heart, or summoneth us before Him by some stronger thrill or pang of conscience, by fear of death or hell, and asketh us, "Whose art thou? whence comest thou?[r] whither goest thou?" He stands in the way, as the Angel before Balaam, and brings us to a stand. And so He sends us back into ourselves, casts some ray of light into our souls, lights up before us past and to come, how our ways have been turned from Him, and whither they lead, until we shrink back in terror from the pit of Hell to which they were tending. He has doubtless called many by these very words. "I thought on my ways, and turned my feet unto Thy testimonies." If for one by whom God vouchsafed to speak, who had promised to keep God's law, who had chosen the better part and God for his own, and could say those great words, "Thou, (not any created thing, but) Thou, Thyself, art my Portion, O Lord," if for such an one it had not been safe to go on, but he had had to think on and recount his ways, and so to turn to God, how shall it be for me?

How can it be safe for us, brethren, not to know, as fully as we can, our past lives? how can we be forgiven our sins, unless we repent of them? or repent of them, unless we know them? or know them, unless we think on them? or do ye think that because ye know, in a general way, where ye passed your lives, what has been your outward calling, your bodily employment, with whom ye have lived, conversed, yea, the changes of your circumstances, therefore ye know your inward lives? Your lives are not the mere outward life of the body; they are chiefly the life of the soul; not merely what we did, spake, thought, but why we did what we did, whether we lived, acted, thought, with a view to God, or to the world and ourselves. If the Psalmist knew not of *his* ways before he thus pondered, weighed them, if, before this, he was on a wrong way, if the greater part of mankind are deceiving themselves, thinking that they shall be saved, while they are yet on "the broad way which

[r] Gen. xvi. 8.

leadeth to destruction," yea, and even think themselves safe, *because* they are on the broad way, and do as others do, are not singular, are with the many who go to destruction, how can we think that we are safe, if we "think" not "on our ways?"

On the contrary, all, probably, who ever thought on their ways, have found with the Psalmist, that they before deceived themselves. It is of *us* that the Psalmist chiefly speaks; for *us*, that God put it into his mouth so to speak, that we, taking his words into ours, might bear witness to ourselves. We repeat, month by month, or some, day by day, to God, "I thought on my ways and turned my feet unto Thy testimonies;" we confess what is needful to us, if we have not done it; what is true, and a blessing to us, if we have. It is mostly by little steps that people go out of the way. Even great falls are prepared by many little ones. They hold little things of no account, and so, as the Wise man saith, "they fall by little and little.[s]" And thus, they know not when they went out of God's Way, because, perhaps, their whole life has been, step by step, a going out of His Way. The ways of life and death part most often at what seems at first something very slight. They will seem to go on, long time, side by side: and even to the last, they who think not on their ways will not see that they have parted, because to them, not observing whither they were going, the ways have widened slowly. Yet, in the end, they are as wide apart as that wherein they end, Heaven or Hell.

Ye often see images of this, how very little two ways part, yet he who hath entered on the one will never reach his home, if it be on the other, unless he retrace his way, or strike back out of that which he has chosen amiss.

We cannot understand what we are now, unless we look back, as far as we may, on all we have been. The same state in outward shew, will be very different as men are sinking down or rising up, going on or returning. Two men may be alike out of the road; yet if the one is leaving the right road,

[s] Ecclus xix. 1.

the other striking back into it, their ends will be very different. This or that act may be a sin of weakness, or negligence, or ignorance; but if often repeated, and not repented, it will be known sin. And so people cheat themselves. They will not see their whole selves. They *will* forget that to-day's act of gluttony, or levity, or self-will, or seeking man's praise, if it be added to those of former days, is not merely a slight sin, but is making them what Scripture calls gluttons, or vain or heady persons. They will not see that each fresh, unrepented sin, is one step more out of the way, one step more on the way to Hell. They will not look back, lest they should see how far out of the way they are, how much they must undo. Yet believe this, my brethren, it is the fruit of experience. Whosoever, I may say, has not, all his life through, been taking heed to his ways, and has, at whatever time, been brought, by the Grace of God, to look back on his whole past life, has found much evil, which he thought not of; much or most which he thought to be good, to be at least mixed up with, and spoiled by, real evil. Very many have found that they were on the way to Hell, when they thought they were on the way to Heaven, because they could not part with the hope of it. If this have been so with others, why should it not be with thee? If all who look not into themselves, forget themselves, are ignorant of themselves, whence knowest thou thyself? If others were, unknowing, on the brink of Hell, how knowest thou that it is not just before thy feet? There are many ways to Hell; one only to life; the way is narrow; not to take heed, is to miss it; "the snares of death encompass us;" not to take heed, is to fall into them. Not fully to know thyself, as far as thou canst, is to walk blindly on a precipice, where to fall, is to perish for ever.

Be not disheartened, because it seems so great a task to review the ways of a whole life, in which, perhaps, some of us could not recal distinctly one single day. God asketh of thee what thou canst do, not what thou canst not; and what God teacheth to do, He enables to do, as far as is needed. If we do what we can, He Who, by His Grace,

enables us to do it, and, for His Mercy's sake, accepts it, will, "out of the exhaustless[1] Fountain of His Mercy and the Treasure of His Merits," supply what is lacking, either to our knowledge of our sins or to our repentance. Our ways, entangled though they have been, will not seem so, if we set ourselves steadily to look at them; and He Who, in the Judgment Day, will lay them open to those who know them not here, will, if we pray, lay them open to us now, that we see them not to our endless shame then.

Only be in earnest, and pray to be so. Look back into thyself; bring, as well as thou canst, thy past life before thee, or throw thyself back into it. Something which has been amiss in thee, which has not been according to the law of God, will mostly stand out before thee; trace it back into its first beginnings, (it is almost always some sin of childhood), see how much of life perhaps it stained, whether it is wholly mastered now, whether it be in thee in some other form still, what other sins it branched out into. Or try to bring before you your earliest life. Recall in it any one fault you can remember. It was, too likely, the first parting from the law of God. The sins of childhood are the images and shadows of the deeper sins of the full-grown being. Some deceit to cover a childish fault, some wrong curiosity, some unchecked feeling of envy or jealousy, some indulged anger, or wrong desire of human praise, or vanity, some preference of self or emulation of others, have been, alas! too often the forerunners of years of deadly sin, or of a wrong aim in all life, of direct evil, or the eating out and cankering of that which was good.

Do this, in mind, under the Eye of your Merciful Redeemer. Pray Him, Who searcheth the hearts and reins, to lay open thine own to thee, and to have compassion on thee. It may be that thou wilt find what thou hast hitherto thought good in thee, melt away before the fire of His Holy Presence. Yet, even thus, own unto Him, that "thou art wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked,"

[1] See Paradise for the Christian Soul, P. iii. on Penitence, pp. 35 and 54.

and buy of Him, as He biddeth thee,[u] "gold tried in the fire, that thou mayest be rich, and white raiment, that thou mayest be clothed, and the shame of thy nakedness do not appear, and anoint thine eyes with eye-salve, that thou mayest see." It may be that thou wilt find thyself from head to foot a leper, almost thy whole self tainted with the leprosy of some prevailing sin; yet, even thus, fall down before Him, with the leper in the Gospel, and say "Lord, if Thou wilt, Thou canst make me clean," and He will say unto thee also, "I will; be thou clean." It would bring but despair to review our sins, except, as St. Mary Magdalene, at the Foot of His Cross. It will deepen thy penitence, while it sustains thee;—deepen thy penitence, since thy sins nailed Him there, and thou perhaps hast crucified Him afresh, and wasted in thyself the Price of His Blood; It will sustain thee, since for thee He was crucified, for thee on the Cross He prayed, "Father forgive them, for they know not what they do."

He, Who hath prayed for thee, will strengthen thee. Only, when thy heart is set at liberty, pray that thou mayest "*run* the way of God's Commandments." "Make haste and delay not to keep God's Commandments." Nothing besides lingers. Time is sweeping by. Thy life hasting away. The Day of Judgment is drawing on. Eternity is at hand. The Judge is at the door. Year by year whirls on more rapidly. Thy way, if it be not turned backward to God, is hurrying thee more onward, away from Him and to the pit. If not nearer, day by day it becomes further. Most have lost too much time already. Thou must feel thyself far short of that measure, which God in the Eternal Purpose of His Goodness intended for thee. Thou canst not think that thou wast made in the Image of God, redeemed by the Precious Blood of Christ, endowed with His Spirit, called to His Faith, waited for by His Grace, watched over by His Providence, tended by Angels, chosen to be set among them in His Presence in Everlasting Bliss, to enter into the Joy of thy Lord, and be nothing more than now thou art!

[u] Rev. iii. 17, 18.

Choose then, with steadfast heart, Him Who hath chosen thee; love Him Who hath loved thee. "Make haste and delay not." Pray Him to draw thee, that thou mayest run after Him; lay aside every weight, that thou mayest run; and He will give thee strength that "thou shalt run and not be weary, walk and not faint." "He will bear thee up, that thou dash not thy foot against a stone." "Thou shalt tread on the Lion and the Dragon," through Him, Who trode them under His Feet, that He might tread them under thine. He will give thee "Grace for grace," lead thee "from strength to strength." He, if in earnest thou seek Him now, and give thyself wholly to Him, will give thee back all thou hast lost; the Grace thou hast wasted; the Love thou hast chilled; the Purity thou hast stained; His Spirit Which thou hast grieved. He, in the residue of thy years, will accomplish in thee all His Work, will form thee to the full stature of His Grace and Love for Which He made thee, that thou mayest love Him "with an everlasting love," in overflowing joy, and transporting glory, and never-sating, ever-satisfying bliss, in Himself, The Fountain of all Bliss and all Good.

SERMON XII.

IRREVERSIBLE CHASTISEMENTS.

LENT.

PROVERBS I. 24.—28.

"*Because I have called and ye refused; I have stretched out My Hand and no man regarded; but ye have set at nought all My counsel, and would none of My reproof: I also will laugh at your calamity; I will mock when your fear cometh; when your fear cometh as desolation, and your destruction cometh as a whirlwind; when distress and anguish cometh upon you. Then shall they call upon Me, but I will not answer; they shall seek Me early, but they shall not find Me.*"

MOST, who are in the right way now, have probably been, at some period of their life, more or less, longer or shorter, in strong fear for their souls. It may have been in childhood, and they may have well-nigh forgotten it; but so aweful is God's Holiness, so wayward man's heart, that few probably have not been in a state, in which great fear was a wholesome remedy for their sin. At such periods, such passages as the text, and other warning words of Holy Scripture, are often borne in upon the soul, and amaze and confound it. Careless before, they are awakened from their death-sleep now, by sickness, it may be, or sudden loss, or aweful deaths, and see, as it were, a hand-writing on the

wall, whose meaning they cannot read, but which seems to speak their condemnation, to be full of "lamentations, and mourning, and woe." Or, again, in periods of humiliation, like the present, when soul and body are brought low by fasting, and we retire more into ourselves, and see our sins face to face, and that darker and more hateful as the light of His Cross falls upon them, and we feel more keenly that "it *is* an evil thing and bitter" to offend the Lord, they especially whose consciences are tenderest, or to whom penitence is a new course, will stand in doubt whether they do not read their own sentence in them. They are conscious of having been called, of having neglected calls; why should not this be true of them?

One dare not deny that these passages have a terrible meaning; the terror they inspire is of God. Whether to awaken the careless, or to arouse to more earnest duty those already awakened, it is the Voice of God, in power and in majesty; and, as such, is to be greatly feared. It is a light, flashing forth from Him, amid the thick darkness, darkness, which may be felt; searching awefully, by terror, into the thick and tangled wilderness of man's heart, discovering its dark corners, and revealing to it, dimly and indistinctly, forms of Hell, and the wrath to come which it is treasuring up for itself. But hopeless is not Christian fear. Dark though the cloud be which God brings over man's earthliness, as a chastisement for his sins, His Bow is still in it. When God so reveals Himself to the sinner's heart, they *should* be struck to the earth, yet only to ask, "Lord, what wouldest Thou have me to do?" Our "faces" should be "filled with shame," but only that we "may seek Thy Name, O Lord.[a]"

The words, then, of the text are aweful, but not hopeless; they pronounce God's Judgment on the finally impenitent; the penitent they but awaken, that they may "hear the Voice of the Son of God and live." The comfort to the penitent is, that they *do* denounce God's *final* judgment; they *are* hopeless, but not to him; they *are* full of despair, but in death, not in life. For, until the end comes, God

[a] Ps. lxxxiii. 16.

but warns, that He may not strike; slays, that He may make alive; wounds, that He may heal; threatens the impenitent, that He may pardon the penitent.

The sentence pronounced, then, *is* final. The passage speaks not only of "distress and anguish," and "fear," and "calamity," "coming" upon the sinner, as they do, in this life, on those on whom God has mercy, but of "destruction" also. It is, then, no common "anguish" of mind, but that "indignation[b] and wrath, tribulation and anguish," which shall come "upon every soul of man that doeth evil;" no mere "fear" of "wrath to come," but that very wrath itself, when it *is* come; the only thing which is to be feared, the wrath of Almighty God. And the teaching of the whole is this; God is indeed Long-suffering; He warns, calls, re-calls, manifoldly, in various places, publicly, aloud, so that they must hear; "in the streets," "in the chief place of concourse;" but if, hearing, they will not hearken, a time will come when not only He will not hear those who would not hear Him, but all these calls will but increase their anguish and misery.

Such is the fullest and most terrible meaning of the words; and in this, they relate to that time when God will no longer pity nor spare, but the ungodly, who would not "turn at His rebuke," shall perish at it. For Wisdom here is He, Who is the Power of God and the Wisdom[c] of God, the Ever-Blessed Son; He, now our Intercessor, then our Judge; He Who now pleads with us and for us, but then shall say those aweful words, "Those[d] Mine enemies, who would not that I should reign over them, bring hither, and slay them before Me."

But because, in their fullest sense, these words relate to the Day of Days, the Day of Judgment, is there then no sense in which they are fulfilled in this life, or are the fears which they awaken in the sinner's heart, misplaced fears? By no means. Fear they should awaken; only, not despair. They have fulfilments here, and these, tokens of the Divine displeasure, although not hopeless, nor to the uttermost.

[b] Rom. ii. 8, 9. [c] 1 Cor. i. 24. [d] S. Luke xix. 27.

It should appal any one to find that they do appal him. For his conscience, in that it does take alarm at them, bears witness that he has been oftentimes, or for a long period, or even up to that time, one of those against whom they denounce woe. Although, by God's Mercy, not in Hell, he feels that he has been on the way to it, perhaps on the brink of it; that when the Son of God called him to "turn" from it, he refused; that when He "stretched forth" His Bleeding "Hands," he regarded not; that he chose Hell rather than Heaven, Satan rather than God, "the wages of sin" rather than "the Gift of Eternal Life." And it *is* terrible to find that he has been such an one. He may well be dizzy, when he looks back upon himself, may well doubt whether he have not exhausted the mercy of God; whether his own ear be not so chilled, that he can no longer hear God's Voice; whether in his anguish God will indeed hear. It is terrible to have been, in whatever degree, like those who shall be damned. Then also his fears are true. He can neither hear God's Voice so distinctly as those who have ever listened to it, nor does God in many things hear him. And so he has come wilfully to a state in which he is held for a time against his will. By stopping his ears, he has lost the power, at once to hear; by living in darkness, he is dazzled and perplexed by the renewed entrance of light. He sees some broad lights and shadows of day, "men, as trees, walking;" but he cannot discern the Divine features, the lineaments and expression of the Divine Mind, as traced in God's Law.

As, too, he has in his degree borne the likeness of those on whom this sentence has been pronounced, so in that degree has he in himself the likeness of the sentence itself. All things visible are images of things invisible; and so, since sin came into the world, there have been innumerable images of the final Judgment; and these more or less fully representing it. The Flood, the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah, of Nineveh, Babylon, at last of Jerusalem, were so many instances of a Final Judgment in this life, a Judgment from which there was no escape, no mitigation of it.

Wisdom in Noah, had "uttered her Voice," had "preached righteousness" for one hundred and twenty years, and no man regarded: when he entered the Ark, it was too late; "the Flood came and swept them all away." In Lot she spake to his two sons-in-law, "Up get you out of this place, for the Lord will destoy this city; but he seemed as one that mocked unto his sons-in-law;" when he left the city, it was too late. Nineveh repented at the preaching of Jonah, relapsed, "turned not at the reproof" of Nahum; "the gates of the city were opened, and the palace dissolved.[e]" In Babylon and Jerusalem we see images of the final sentence, without remedy. When the hand-writing appeared to Belshazzar on the wall, it was too late; Daniel came not as to Nebuchadnezzar his father, to bid him "break off his sins by repentance, and his iniquities, by shewing mercy on the poor," but to read his doom; "Thou, his son, hast not humbled thine heart, though thou knewest all this, but hast lifted up thyself against the Lord of Heaven—God hath numbered thy kingdom and finished it." "In that night was Belshazzar the king of the Chaldeans, slain.[f]" God had called to him by His dispensations to his father; now He called no more, but judged. Our Lord, even when weeping over Jerusalem, pronounced its sentence, as a whole, "if thou hadst known, even thou, at least in this thy day, the things which belong unto thy peace! but now they are hid from thine eyes—they shall not leave in thee one stone upon another, because thou knewest not the time of thy visitation.[g]" Individuals were yet called to "save themselves from this untoward generation;" itself was condemned.

All these were images of the last Judgment; and hence it happens that the prophets, in denouncing God's temporal Judgments, are inspired so to speak, as to warn also "to flee from the wrath to come." "The Day of the Lord," in the prophets, is, at once, some time when He shall signally visit a sinful nation, and the Day of Judgment. "Woe unto you," says the prophet Amos,[h] to the self-deceivers in

[e] Nahum ii. 6. [f] Dan. v. 22, 26, 30. [g] Luke xix. 41.—44. [h] Amos v. 18, 20.

Israel, "Woe unto you that desire the Day of the Lord! the Day of the Lord is darkness and not light. Shall not the Day of the Lord be darkness and not light? even very dark and no brightness in it?" And the prophet Joel, gradually deepens his description of the terrors of that day, until from the judgment by God's great army, the locusts, he speaks of the sun being "turned into darkness and the moon into blood," and we feel that "the great and terrible day" which he announces, is not the destruction of Jerusalem only, but that which none may "abide," unless God Himself and their Judge be their Stay. Our Lord also, so foretells the destruction of Jerusalem and the Day of Judgment together, that one knows not, of that which seems to be spoken of Jerusalem, how much may not yet be to be fulfilled far more fearfully before the end of the world.

But beside these great images of the Day of Judgment, or others every where in the history of the world, when fire, or floods, or hurricanes, or earthquakes, or volcanoes, or man at once swallow up a whole people or city in one wide desolation, and ends their trial here by sudden destruction, there are in the lives or deaths of individuals, other events which so far partake of the same character, that they are final. In the case of others, indeed, we must be careful of applying God's Judgments, remembering ourselves; lest *they* fall only to arise; *we*, if we think we stand, may fall and rise not. Sudden deaths may be God's final judgment on the wicked, or, because[1] there is some good thing in him, or lest he be corrupted by the world. Grievous losses may be the taking away of an idol, or the perfecting of Saints, as Job. Loss of health may be the punishment of sin, or to suffer with Christ. All suffering, mental or bodily, has a twofold character; it is at once punishment and chastisement; it at once expresses God's hatred for the sin and mercy to the sinner; it is at once the wrath and love of Almighty God. And which of these two predominates, whether we are to look upon them chiefly as punishments for our past sins, or as discipline to carry us onward, we

[1] 1 Kings xiv. 13.

may, each in our own case, mostly see. But such as most of us are, we may most safely look upon them as merciful punishments, punishments less than our sins deserve, that we may escape what they indeed deserve.

And of these Judgments, many are for this life without remedy. God warns that He may not strike; but when He does strike, a man's whole life is changed. "They cry, but He does not answer." Adam was warned; when he had tasted the forbidden fruit, it was too late; Paradise was lost; "in the sweat of" his "brow" must he "eat bread;" "to dust" must he "return." When righteous Lot returned to Sodom, he was rescued from it, but with the loss of all. When Esau profanely sold his birthright, he lost the blessing also, and "found[k] no place of repentance, though he sought it carefully with tears." For one hasty word, Moses lost Canaan; he who had been admitted to be intercessor for the Lord's Heritage, was not heard for himself. Eli heard the sentence passed upon his two evil sons and his whole house, and passed the closing years of his life in mute expectation of the evil which should befall Israel, and his sons, and the ark of God, the tidings of which ended it. When David sinned, God struck the child, and "he fasted and lay on the ground," but God heard him not; and his whole later life was darkened by the parricide or fratricide and other evil deeds of his sons. "The sword never" departed "from his house." All these, very different in character, and some in acceptableness with God, yet agree in this, the sentence passed upon them was final; their trial was changed; God had decreed, and would not reverse it. And therefore it became even evil to attempt what God had expressly withholden. When Israel, in the wilderness, had filled up the sum of their rebellions, by "thinking[l] scorn of that pleasant land" promised them of God, and were doomed to leave their bones in the wilderness, the attempt to do what they before were bidden, became sin and their destruction. "Lo we be here," they said,[m] "and will go up unto the place which the

[k] Heb. xii. 17. [l] Ps. cvi. 24. [m] Num. xiv. 40. 41.

Lord hath promised, for we have sinned." But the answer of God by Moses was, "Wherefore do ye transgress the commandment of the Lord? but it shall not prosper." When Manasseh had provoked the Lord, so that He said "I will remove Judah also out of My sight, as I have removed Israel," the piety, and penitence, and humiliation of king Josiah availed not, except that the evil came not in his days;[n] and one trial of his sons was, whether they would serve the king of Babylon, the scourge whom God had appointed.

Now something of this kind does happen very commonly to individuals, partly in what is the fixed order of God's Providence, partly in extraordinary dispensations. It has been observed,[o] how, to certain courses of sin, God does annex certain punishments, and that, although for a time, and up to a certain degree of sin, they may not, to any great extent follow, yet, beyond that bound, they do follow irresistibly, irreversibly. Manifold diseases "of mind, body, or estate," whereby God chastens sin, have this in common, that there is no certain time when the blow comes. This God keeps in His Own Hands and Secret Purpose, that no one may think he may, with impunity, sin even up to a certain point; suffering and loss follow upon all sin, only not those extremest losses. Nor again can we tell the rule by which God dispenseth them; to us they seem to fall more suddenly on some, while others go on longer without visible punishment. We only know that happy they who are chastened soonest. But although we cannot tell the measures of the Divine Rule, we can see the Rule itself. Every step in sin must be followed with bitterness; but, as we see that those heaviest chastisements do not mostly fall at once, so mostly is there a time at which they *do* fall. There may be exceptions of exceeding mercy, in which God, by some sudden result of the sin, scares back the sinner at once. There may be fearful instances of abandonment, in which God leaves him, outwardly almost unhindered, to the hard-

[n] 2 Kings xxii. 19, 20.; xxiii. 26, 27.; Jer. xxvii. 12, &c.

[o] Bp. Butler's Analogy, P. 1, c. 2.

ness of his own heart. But mostly God deals in neither of these ways. There come lesser warnings; at first, slighter penalties of the sin. "Wisdom crieth without." Mentally a person feels a decaying mind, less love of holy things, less joy in the thought of God. The careless child or youth feels itself unequal to those once its equals, or to what it had been. In sins more visibly wasting, the mind is darkened, the body feels some effects of the sin. But the worst is not yet come. The imagination is not at once hopelessly haunted; health does not at once decay; the reputation is not at once for ever lost; property not at once ruined; "drunkenness" doth not at once "clothe a man with rags;" "wine and new wine" do not at once "take away the heart," that is, deaden and darken the understanding and the affections. And yet the time does come (and none can tell how soon), when all is so far hopeless. Powers of mind, which have been uncultivated, are lost and cannot be recalled. Neglected youth incapacitates for after-duties. The first warm, pure glow of early affection has been quenched by sin, the first bloom has been worn away by its withering touch; the sinner cannot change himself; and to have to turn to God, at last, with a dried, seared heart, is often, for a long time, the chastisement of the penitent. The mind which has entertained angry, or vain, or impure, or light thoughts, becomes haunted with them, longs to be meek, and humble, and pure, and earnest, and cannot drive away what is contrary to all these. The child becomes self-willed, or irritable, or obstinate, or selfish, or indolent, or vain, and if, when grown, it turns back, or more entirely to God, self-will, or anger, or obstinacy, or selfishness, or indolence, or vanity, singly or together, become its great trial and its torment. A sudden disgrace falls, either from human discipline or from the law (herein the minister of God), and the whole life is tainted. Undue desire of gain or speculation, by many carried on long with impunity, ruins a whole estate irrecoverably. The slight fault (as we deem it), or carelessness of the parent, bursts out in the child in full-grown, headstrong sin; secret faults lead to irreligious

marriage, and that embitters the whole life. Or after perhaps many neglected warnings, God awakens the sleeping sinner by some sharp, piercing loss, or takes away what was loved for its own sake and had become an idol in His temple, and his sun is darkened at noon-day, and sets in sorrow. The very attempt to remedy many of these afflictions, aggravates them; eager attempts to regain health wasted by sin, have often entailed sickness more deadly, or outward circumstances are ruined more hopelessly. The lot henceforth marked out is to confess, with pious Eli, "It is the Lord; let Him do as seemeth Him best."

We must all have seen and known such; happy if, by God's great Mercy, any of us is not in his degree such. Yet not unhappy they, who feel themselves to be such, and acknowledging God's Judgments in this life, repent, and pray, and strive the more earnestly, that it be not for destruction, but to "save the soul in the Day of the Lord." It may be, perhaps, that, as that Day approaches, there will be more of the forerunners of that Day, and that God's Judgments will be more visibly seen, sinners more speedily or more signally punished, those whom God will spare, more severely chastened. It may be, that as the light is spread abroad more widely, sin will take a deadlier character. Whatever be the case of individuals, it must, in its fearful mass, be more offensive in the Sight of Almighty God. It is an aweful blessing to have God in the midst of us. The light which should enlighten, may be the lightning to destroy. But whether more or no than at other times, we do see these Judgments plain every where. Whether for correction or for punishment, the restoration of Penitents or the ripening of Saints, we do see varied forms of sudden affliction, agonizing, irremediable, darkening life at once, making the sufferer, "if in this life only we had hope in Christ, of all men, most miserable."

And whether such have come on any of us as yet or no, their very presence should awe us. The nearness of Almighty God, in whatever way He manifests Himself, is very aweful; for it is the Presence of "Him Who can cast

both body and soul into Hell;" and these are His Presence as a Judge, at "Whose Presence" "the ungodly shall perish." They are present Judgments, witnesses of that which shall be; that it will be severe, unsparing, irremediable. If God so judges here, how much more at the end! if in the Day of Grace, how much more in the Day of Wrath! if on earth, how much more in Hell! They exhibit to us God, as we least like to think of Him, as a Holy God, Who endureth not sin; they reveal to sight what we believe, a future doom; they falsify Satan's smooth assurances, whereby he lulls the sinner to rest; and whereas he says, "God will not punish," they display to our eyes His sentence, "I will[p] not spare the guilty."

And therefore they *should* awe us all, especially such as are even half-conscious that there is some besetting sin, slight as it may seem, to which they are continually yielding. Unheedful, such permit sin to accumulate after sin; as though small drops of rain swelled not torrents, and overthrew houses, or the small drifted sand buried not whole companies in one death! Yet sin after sin is filling up the measure of their provocations and the fearful treasure of the Wrath of Almighty God. But who shall tell when judgment shall come and the Long-suffering of God be exhausted? Or who shall weigh the character of sin, as though God would spare this, and visit others only? No conscious sin is slight; nothing whereof any is but half-conscious that it is sin. The subtlest may be the most deadly. All sin must be eating out the Love of God, and His Life in the soul. All, if it be slight as a spider's web, at the end will intertwine, until they entangle every limb, and bind as a cable. And therefore, when God sees some good, He, by the lightning of His Judgments, discovereth the thick, tangled hiding-places of man's heart; and the fire which sears all earthly hope, often first discovers to a man the full nature of what he had harboured within, or, by its flash, reveals the precipice whereon he was standing.

But if that fire do fall, then man's only wisdom is, with

[p] Exod. xxxiv. 7.

what strength he has, darkened though his path be, by the bewildering of past sin, to grope his way onward in the new path wherein God hath set him. The past is, in one sense, closed. He has been tried, has failed, and is in this way, perhaps, tried no more. He may, through Christ's Atoning Blood, wash away the past, by repentance; what he would continually undo, God will, in the end, efface, as though never done; but in this life, it may be, he is not permitted to approve himself wherein he failed. The past stands fixed as Adamant, yet to him, as Paradise to Adam, inaccessible. His trial is changed, and part of his purifying punishment may be the burning memory of a past, which he cannot act again other than he did. This is, in a degree, true of all. Full-grown, we cannot obliterate the failures of childhood, youth, opening life. If we failed, we have missed what, by God's grace, we might have become. Whole periods of our existence have passed away, and are closed to us. Yet, through God's Overflowing Mercy, there remains trial still. In one way God answereth us not, that we may call upon Him as He will hear. He answereth not in temporal mercies, that He may answer in Eternal Loving-kindness. He lets us eat of the fruit of our own way, that, by its bitterness, we may learn to leave our own way, and choose His. There is trial yet; and where there is trial, there is God's strength ready to aid, and a Saviour looking on to uphold, and to crown in Heaven, where we see only that we deserved Hell. It is already something, even to bow patiently and lie still. For so the sinner begins to have the same will with God, if, when God willeth to punish, the sinner accepts His Will, and is contented to be punished. The beginning of his sin was to choose his own will; to accept God's is the beginning of the sinner's restoration, and of harmony with Him.

We need not, then, to be dismayed, though reft of all, and for our sin. Since a man is nothing "profited, if he gain the whole world and lose his own soul," so neither is his loss hopeless, though he have lost all, except his soul. Rather, he may gather hope from the very severity of God's

punishment. Sorely must he have needed them, so to be chastised; and therefore needing them so sorely, how great the loving-kindness of God, which past him not by unchastened!

Yet although judgments in this world are not final, and the sinner may yet, in some new way, listen to Wisdom, whose Voice he neglected, yet is it an aweful thing to have been an image of God's irrevocable judgment, to have cried where one most dreaded, and, through sin, not to have been heard. It is an aweful thing to be alive as it were from the dead, to look back on the past as a dead life, from which a person has been severed, in a way, by God's strong Hand, yet belonging to him still; to bear about with him the memory of this living death; to be haunted by its phantoms; to have had all around him burnt up by the flames of God's displeasure, and himself awakened from his death-sleep, by the scorching of the fire which consumed him, himself as "a brand snatched out of the burning." It is a life, to be preserved only by continual watchfulness, as again ready to be extinct. And yet it may be that, among the redeemed around the Throne of the Lamb, some who shall wear the brightest crowns, will be from among those who passed their years in penitence and joyous sorrow, witnesses to the Heavenly Hosts of God's overflowing Love, and to what height of life the penitent humble love of Christ may raise from what exceeding depth of death.

And this may, in a degree, be a comfort to us all. For almost all may too well know of themselves how they, in former seasons, neglected Wisdom's Voice, and have since gathered the bitter fruits. If not outwardly chastened, they have been inwardly. It is one law, fulfilled in different degrees, "whoso obeyeth not God's Call, shall call and not be heard." We all bear about us not only the corrupt tendencies which we by nature had, but these, strengthened upon and against us by our own misdeeds. We were warned, as it may be, within and without, against inattention in the house of God and indevotion, against deeds and words of vanity, slothfulness, selfishness, anger, wilfulness,

self-indulgence, love of this world's praise; we were called, within and without, to fear God only, and not man, to love Him with a whole heart, serve Him wholly, strive against some ensnaring sin; our young hearts yearned for something better than this unsatisfying, unprofitable world. In whatever degree we obeyed not these calls, we suffer. As any of us would serve God more earnestly, they found themselves held back by the chain of their former sins. They had given to the enemy of their souls arms, wherewith to oppose their way. They "cried" to God, and were so far "not heard," that the trial they had brought upon themselves was not at once, perhaps not through many years, removed. They had to struggle on under the burthen they had brought upon themselves, oftentimes discouraged, disheartened, ready to sink or give up under the dreariness, but that God, Who seemed not to hear them, heard them from behind the cloud wherein they saw Him not, and strengthened them, though they scarce ventured to hope it.

Hearken we then to Wisdom's Voice, in whatever stage we are, while yet we may; the sooner the happier. God is ever calling us. Yet now, if we would hear, He calleth more distinctly and more manifoldly, to live, not to the world but to Him. All nature and Grace is His One varied Voice, calling us to return to Him. He called us, ere we, like Samuel, could discern His Voice, and set His Seal upon us, that we, made members of Christ, might, as sons through that mysterious Oneness with The Ever-Blessed Son, know our Father's Voice, and hear His Call, and joy to hear It. He has called us ever since, Himself stirring our inmost souls, and kindling our secret longings; by the thought of His aweful Seal upon us, and the constraining might of His Sacraments; by rites, ordinances, worship, holy Days and Seasons, the remembrance of His Cross and Passion, the Power of His Resurrection. He has called by peace amid sorrow, or restlessness in joy; by remorse for past sin, or by the glowing thrill of some self-sacrificing conquest; by voices of terror or love; by fear and by hope; by glimpses of Heaven or by dread of

Hell; by thoughts of everlasting burnings, or by sight of His Outstretched Arms, once nailed on the Cross, to embrace the whole world, and still extended to protect and to receive us. He is now again calling us by the thickening tokens of His Coming, whether that Coming be, as heretofore, in partial Judgments, or whether He be preparing the last closing strife. He is calling us by the examples of others whom He has called, or by His fearful abandonment of those who neglect His Calls, to take His side. He shews more clearly that we must choose our side, with Him, or with the world. He is calling us to a more resolute, generous, self-devoted, service, to take Him Alone for our "Portion" and "exceeding great Reward.[q]"

If we shrink from the first earnest step into the narrow path, to which all these Calls invite us, and cannot bear His gentle Voice, calling us to amend our ways and our doings, think we how we shall bear That Voice, sentencing the wicked "to shame and everlasting contempt," which Scripture speaks of so awefully, as the Laugh of Almighty God. "I also will laugh at your calamity, I will mock when your fear cometh." We can imagine the scornful laugh of devils, as they jeer at the wretched folly of the miserable beings who were deluded by them and are their prey; many have thought that they heard it. We know the bitter laugh of the scornful. But that Almighty God should again and again tell us, that He should "laugh,[r] and have them in derision;" that He Who, we know, hath no passions, should speak of Himself as though He had them; He, Who is Love should "mock" at His creature's misery; how does it picture to us that utter alienation from Him, which shall live on eternally, disregarded, unnoticed, by Him, in Hell!

Oh then, while yet the day of Mercy lasts, and the door is not shut to, and God's very Judgments are His Mercies, and instead of that aweful laugh, Angels shall joy "over one sinner that repenteth," turn we from our smooth, easy ways, into the narrow, stricter way of self-renunciation and holy obedience. By God's Mercy, there is no "too late" with

[q] Ps. cxix. 57.; Gen. xv. 1.

[r] Ps. ii. 4.; xxxvii. 13.; lix. 8.

Him, until all is closed. In one sense we must all say, with the pious penitent[r] of old, "O Lord, too late have I loved Thee." For did we not begin to love God too late, if we ever loved any thing instead of Him, Who ever loved us? Yet there is no "too late" for us to love God, while God still calls us to love Him. If we still hear the Call, within or without, by His word or His Preachers, or by the disquiet of our own conscience, it is not too late for us. Have we not heard to-day, how Jesus "went to be Guest with a man that is a sinner!" Jesus still stands without and knocks. Open we our hearts to Him now, that He, in that Great and Terrible Day, upon which Eternity hangs, may hear us, when we cry "Lord, Lord, open unto us." Open we to Him, by repentance, by undoing, as we may, the ill we have done, and doing what heretofore we neglected to do, and He will say in our inmost souls, as He did of Zacchaeus, "Salvation is this day come to this house;" for He Himself, Who Alone is our Salvation, shall enter in and dwell in the decayed mansion of our souls, and restore and cleanse them. Wherever we be in years, whether we have stood idle until the third, sixth, ninth, or eleventh hour, and when bid to go and work in His Vineyard, refused, and said "I will not," yet, late though it be with any of us, if we go now, He will not account it "too late" Who has so long waited for us. He will not accept us only, but will reward us with His Own Joy. "To-day," He hath said, "if ye will hear His Voice!" "But He," saith[s] that same father, "Who hath to-day promised forgiveness to the penitent, promiseth not a morrow to him who putteth off repentance." Obey His Blessed Call now, and, having obeyed it once, never again disobey any call within you, to do His Will.

While we mourn our neglect of past Calls, our sorrow, which is still His Gift and Call within us, will draw down His gladdening Look, which will anew call us unto Him. Use we now the retirement, and humiliation, and deadening

[r] S. Aug. Conf. x. 38.

[s] S. Aug. in Ps. ci. Serm. I. § 10. ed. Ben. tom. iv. col. 1098. Comp. Serm. 32, (82 Ben.) § 14. p. 265, Oxf. Tr.

of ourselves in this Holy Season, to nail ourselves closer to His Sacred Cross. There where we would lay down our sins, seek we to remain ourselves, coveting no more the pleasures, or distinctions, or vanities of the world, but longing only so to pass through it, that when it passeth away, we may be found abiding by His Side. Pass we by no Call which, however indistinctly, we may have, and He will cheer us with clearer and gladlier Calls. Our very sorrow and fear will be our joy and hope; our very stumblings our strength, and dimness our light, while stumbling or in darkness we feel after Him Who is our Stay, our Light, our Joy. We shall, step by step, know more and more what is "the exceeding greatness of His power to usward," and "what the hope of His Calling;" and we, if such be our lot, shall, with that gladlier company who obeyed His earlier Calls, in one blessed, guarded band, be led on by Him, by paths which we know not, upborne by His Cross which we would bear, until we reach His Holy Hill, and His last Call out of this fleeting world, shall call us to His Side, our Refuge and Abiding-place; and, cleansed anew by His Blood, while in the Judgment-day we still tremble at the sight of our many neglected calls, we shall find, in His everlasting Mercy, that "whom He called, them He also justified, and whom He justified, them He also glorified." Only, as we would hear that last blissful Call, hearken we each to the next, whereby He calleth us to break off any, the very slightest evil, or to gird ourselves to any good and follow Him without delay.

Now to Him That hath saved us, and called us with a Holy Calling, and washed us from our sins with His Blood, be, with the Father and the Holy Ghost, blessing, and glory, and wisdom, and thanksgiving, and honour, and power, and might, for ever and ever. Amen.

SERMON XIII.

GOD'S PRESENCE IN LONELINESS.

LENT.

HOSEA. II. 14.

"*Therefore, behold, I will allure her and bring her into the wilderness, and speak comfortably unto her.*[a]"

No one has passed through Lent with any earnestness of purpose, without gaining some fruit for the soul. They may have dreaded its approach, have shrunk from the hardness of its first few days, have had misgivings about its continuance, have been glad of its passing by, at times been weary of it and wished it gone, and longed for Easter rather to close it, than for its own glad Halleluiahs in its Risen Lord. These are human weaknesses; yet if even thus the soul submits itself, for the sake of God, to the Will of God, its service, however imperfect, will be blessed. God so craves the love of man, whom He made for Himself, that He, to Whom we owe our all, our earliest and best, accepts the very crumbs. He Who rewards the "cup of cold water" given to a disciple in His Name, accepts, for His Son's Sake, the very least thing denied to self, as given to Him. "It is[b] good for a man that he bear the yoke in his youth."

[a] עַל־לִבָּהּ. (Heb. ver. 16.) "To her heart." Eng. Marg. [b] Lam. iii. 27.

Yet if even at last we take it, God lays it gently upon us, "draws[c]" us, as He says, "with the cords of a man, with the bands of Love," and lifts it tenderly from time to time, that it gall us not. Blessed is it, if but for forty days together, to know what it is to bear some yoke for Christ! For so the Prophet goes on, "I inclined unto them, I fed them."

When the neck is any how bowed under the yoke of Christ, He bowethfrom Heaven, His Dwelling-place, whence for us He came down; He inclineth in Love towards us, as He saith, "I[d] dwell in the high and holy Place, with him also who is of a contrite and humble spirit, to revive the spirit of the humble, and to revive the heart of the contrite ones." He Who saith, "Man[e] shall not live by bread alone," Himself feedeth the soul, which, with Him and for His, is an hungred. He replaceth with His Own Love whatever, for His Love, is resigned.

Yet Lent should take in and be a discipline of the whole man, in union with the Passion of his Lord and God. Prayer, alms, and fasting, form one holy band, for which our Blessed Lord gives rules together, and which draw up the soul to Him; for they grow out of and cherish the love to Him, love to His members for His sake, and, for His sake, denial of self. Fasting is a spiritual exercise, acting on the soul through the body, for good, as the body so often acts on the soul for evil. Yet, therefore, must we the more take heed, that we stop not short in the body, and the soul lose not its refreshment through the body's privations. While we bring the body low, or "into subjection,[f]" by fasting, the soul must be cleansed by humiliation, fed by contemplation. And it is probably one chief reason why Lent, though always healthful, does not bring deeper profit to some whom it does profit, that they do not avail themselves enough of it, to gather themselves up in retirement, and there to hold converse with their God.

From the first dawning of conversion to the hour of death, it is in solitude mostly that God speaks to the soul. "Let

[c] Hos. xi. 4. [d] Is. lvii. 15. [e] Deut. viii. 3. [f] 1 Cor. ix. 27.

us search the Scriptures," says a holy inward writer,[g] "and we shall find that scarce ever, or never, did God speak in a multitude; but so often as He would have any thing known to men, He shewed Himself, not to nations or peoples, but either to single persons, or very few, and those severed from the common throng of men, either in the silence of the night, in the fields or in deserts, in mountains or in vallies. So spake He with Noah, with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, with Moses, David, and Samuel, and all the Prophets." In the desert, He formed Moses for forty years, and St. John Baptist all his life; revealed Himself to Moses in the flame of fire in the bush, and to St. John in that which it signified, His Incarnate Son. To the ancient people, the image of the Church, He revealed Himself not, until He led them into the wilderness apart; and even then He took first the seventy, then Moses alone, into "the secret of His Presence," to give him the Ten Commandments. Of all things He showed him the pattern alone on the Mount.[h] When "following the sheep[i]" alone, He took David to be the shepherd of His people, and Amos[k] to prophecy unto them; and to the shepherds, first of all, in their "lonely watches by night," He revealed His Son. Alone, "in the cleft of the rock,[l]" Moses saw what man could see of His Glory; and Elijah heard the Lord pass by and the still small voice; and Elisha received a double portion of his master's spirit, and saw the image of his Ascending Lord; and in the isle of Patmos,[m] in banishment for the testimony of Jesus Christ, St. John saw what should be until the end, the toils of the Church on earth and her glories in Heaven, and his Lord, Who loved him, in His Glory.[n] When Jacob fled from Esau, his brother, then lonely, with his pilgrim staff,[o] he saw the ladder which reached to Heaven, and Angels ascending and descending, and was himself the image of Him upon Whom they descended; on his return, as he passed the night alone,[p] the Angel, in whom God was, found him, and, by his strength,

[g] Hugo de S. Victore de Arca Noe. L. 4, c. 4. [h] Heb. viii. 5.
[i] Ps. lxxviii. 70, 71. [k] Amos vii. 14, 15. [l] Ex. xxxiii. 22.
[m] Rev. i. 9. [n] Ib. i. 13.—16. [o] Gen. xxxii. 10. [p] Ib. 24.

he had power with God; his strength were his faith and tears, wherewith he wept and made supplication unto Him.[q] Ezekiel, a captive and solitary, by the river Chebar,[r] saw the glory of God: and Daniel having, in loneliness humbled his soul with fasting, saw "the vision of truth, and his own lot" at the end[s] of all things; and it would seem that it was when he was separated with prayer and fasting for the work, that St. Paul was caught into Paradise, and heard unspeakable words.[t] But why speak of man? Was not our Lord, as at this time, for forty days Alone with the wild beasts,[u] in fasting and prayer, tempted by Satan, at once to teach us that in solitude also Satan tempts, and yet that loneliness is the Presence of God and the armour of victory? Ye know how Alone He passed the night[x] in prayer before He chose His disciples; to the disciples alone[y] He manifested His Glory, and revealed "the mysteries[z] of the Kingdom of God;" Alone He prayed in His Agony and Bloody Sweat. But these, ye may say, were holy men and God become Man. Yet for us, not for Himself, did our Lord choose loneliness; to hallow it for us, and teach us to love it, because He loved it, and to support us in it, as being the more with Him. And what was needful for those blessed first-fruits of His redeemed, "His friends,[a]" how should it not be for us sinners?

Yet not to righteous, or to holy did God speak by His Prophet, but to a nation, which, like ourselves, had in its prosperity, multiplied its idols, made gold and silver into gods to worship, had been unfaithful to its God, and abused His gifts.[b] Of her, and such as her, God says, "I will allure her and bring her unto the wilderness." Who was it He would so bring? Her whom He had chosen for His own, endowed her with gifts, tended her with love, guarded her "as the apple of an eye," and she had profaned herself and them, decking herself with them, to please others than

[q] Gen. xxxii. 28.; Hosea xii 4.
[r] Ezek. i. 1.
[s] Dan. x. 2, 3, 12.; xi. 2.; xii. 13.
[t] Acts xiii. 2, 3.; 2 Cor. xii. 4.
[u] S. Mark i. 13.
[x] S. Luke vi. 12.
[y] S. Matt. xvii.
[z] S. Matt. xiii. 11.
[a] S. John xv. 15.
[b] Hosea ii. 8.; x. 1.; ii. 7.—12.

Him, whom He called an adulteress. And what other than an adulteress is that soul which prides itself on His gifts, seeks, by means of them, to gain the favour and esteem of men rather than His, loves the creature rather than the Creator, the world more than God, and, being made for God, loves any thing out of God, more than Him? Hard does the word seem, brethren; hard is it to confess that we have been so far off from God, to think that we have, indeed, so greatly offended Him, that portions of life wherein we might have won His Love, and been like unto the Angels, and grown in grace and love, were spent in defacing His image, and in ourselves dishonouring Himself. Yet the very depth of our misery sheweth the more the depth of His forgiving Mercy.

Of *such* He says, "I will allure her." He vouchsafes to speak to us after the manner of men. He will give us, He saith, "Love for love." The world hath its sweetnesses, but so hath God. The world would allure us by tinsel, pleasures which fade, joys which destroy; God would allure us by realities, some foretaste of "the torrent of pleasure[c]" which shall overstream the whole soul, some light from Himself parting through the clouds and illumining the soul, if but only with one flash of unearthly brightness, a sweetness which bathes it, as it were, in joy unspeakable, a sense of child-like love, with which, if it but last, it feels itself again a child of God. "I," He saith, "will speak to her heart;" sometimes, so that the soul seems to hear His Voice within her, saying, as it were, "The[d] Master is come, and calleth thee;" rise up quickly; sometimes by the gift of tears, in which the long pent-up heart seems to gush forth; or in some devoted purpose, henceforth to be wholly His, and in all things aim at Him Alone and His Glory; or in willingness to suffer gladly any chastisement He vouchsafes to send; or in some thrill of the whole soul, at the thought that it *can* be yet the object of the Love of God. He speaks as we may best bear to hear, and is fittest for us; but by

[c] Ps. xxxvi. 8.

[d] S. John xi. 28.

Himself or by His servants does He speak to every soul which, led by Him, in silence waits for Him.

Yes! blessed are those holy hours, in which the soul retires from the world, to be alone with God. God's Voice, as Himself, is every where. Within and without He speaks to our souls, if we would hear. Only the din[e] of the world or the tumult of our own hearts, deafens our inward ear to it. Stillness is as His very Presence, for, like the prayer for[f] the Prophet's servant, it opens our senses to perceive what was there to behold, only our eyes were holden. "There is neither speech nor language; the voice is not heard;" but "day unto day uttereth speech[g]" to hearts that hearken, "and night unto night sheweth knowledge." All God's Works, because He has made them, bear the traces of His Hand, and speak of Him to the soul which is alone with Him. All works of man, directed or over-ruled by His Providence, every thing good or bad, speaks of His Presence or His absence. But, chiefly, in the inmost soul He speaks, because there He dwells. Thoughts of Him seem to occupy the infantine eye, as it gazes with such fixed, placid, loving earnestness on something we see not. Him the child's heart, unknowing, seeks, as, unsatisfied with all around, it longs for some deeper love, which shall fill its soul, some One Who shall love it best, Whose whole love it can have, undiminished by His Love for all besides, Which can understand every

[e] Christian Year:—

"Sin is with man at morning break;
And, through the livelong day,
Deafens the ear, that fain would wake
To nature's simple lay.

But when eve's silent footfall steals
Along the Eastern sky,
And, one by one, to earth reveals
Those purer fires on high,

When, one by one, each human sound
Dies on the aweful ear,
Then nature's voice no more is drown'd,
She speaks, and we must hear."

Fourth Sunday after Trinity.

"There are, in this loud stunning tide
Of human care and crime,
With whom the melodies abide
Of the everlasting chime;
Who carry music in their heart,
Through dusky lane and wrangling mart;
Plying their daily task with busier feet,
Because their secret souls a holy strain repeat."

Ib. S. Matthew's Day.

[f] 2 Kings vi. 17.

[g] Ps. xix. 2.

motion of its heart, share its every feeling, wholly love it, and be wholly beloved. And if these first bright drawings have been wasted, still, while it wearies itself with vanities, each pause and breathing-place in its pursuit tells it of Another Object, for Whom it was made, Who is not to be found where and as it seeks. Thence is it, that until, worn out with chasing the wind, it turns to its God, the soul shrinks from being alone. Ye must have felt, some time, an awe come over you, as ye of a sudden stood alone. To be alone is to feel the Presence of God, in love or in displeasure, as a Friend or a Stranger, as One Whose Voice the soul hath heard, and known, and loved, or One it dreads, feeling itself condemned by It. So does God watch over the soul, so plead with it, so ever-present is He, so unwilling to part with it, or that it should part with Him, its only Good; so doth He long, as it were, to find an entrance there, ever knocking at the heart, ever striving to find an avenue into it, that it may receive Him, and, in Him, be blessed for ever. And hence, until the soul will open its whole self to God, it shrinks from inward and outward loneliness. The restless love of amusement, society, outward excitement, even reading, besides any object for itself, has mainly this, to escape being alone with its own thoughts, because there it will find God. Dull often, and weary, will the employment be, but, like the clay used by savages to dull the pain of hunger, it stifles in the soul the sense of the Presence of Him, Whose Love it knows not. And, therefore, does God so often create in the soul a still more aweful loneliness, rending from it that on which its very being hung, that at length it may learn to live alone with God, when all it loved with God is withdrawn from sight. Then, in those sacred solemn hours, if these too it wastes not, it learns to love and to be with Him, Whom "none loseth, but who leaveth,[h]" that only "place of rest imperturbable, where love is not forsaken, if itself forsaketh not.[i]"

[h] S. Aug. Conf. iv. 14.

[i] Ib. 16.

Once, Brethren, at least, ye must be alone;[k] and lonely indeed is that journey, if He be not by thee, Who first trod it for thee, that in it thou mightest "fear no evil." None else can then share thy fears; none can so speak to thy heart; none, though he would die with thee, can share thy journey with thee. Alone must each give up his spirit unto Him Who gave it. Oh may it not be alone, but in union with Him, Whose Words we shall soon hear, "Father, into Thine Hands I commend My Spirit," and Who, with His Own commended our's. But will He then indeed be with us in death, if we be not with Him in life?

Oh, let us then learn to be alone with God now! It is only afar off that the wilderness looks a waste, and terrible, and dry. Was it not there that man did eat Angel's Food, and water gushed out of the hard rock, and bitter waters were made sweet, and God bare His own, and their feet did not swell, and He spake unto them, "and proclaimed Himself Merciful, and Gracious, Long-suffering, and abundant in Goodness and Truth." Trust thyself alone with Him, and so in thine inmost heart will He proclaim Himself unto thee, "The Lord, *Thy* God, keeping Mercy for thousands, forgiving iniquity, and transgression, and sin." There shalt thou speak to God "face to face," and "hear what the Lord thy God will speak" in thee; thou shalt tell Him, thy sorrows, thy falls, thy sins, the wildness, or forgetfulness, or carelessness of thy youth; there pour out before Him griefs which thou wouldest shrink that the world should know, and He shall say unto thee "Thy sins be forgiven thee, go and sin no more." There shall He renew thy soul, hear thy prayer and answer it, shed hope around thee, kindle thy half-choked love, give thee some taste of His Own Boundless Love, give thee the longing to pass out of all besides, out of thy decayed self, gathered upward unto Him, Who came down hither to our misery, to bear us up unto Himself, and make us one spirit with Him.

[k] Christian Year, Twenty-fourth Sunday after Trinity: "Je mourrai seul." Pascal, note ib.—

"Why should we faint and fear to live alone,
Since all alone (so Heaven has willed) we die?"

It was a Heathen who said, "Never am I less alone, than when alone[l]; nor less unemployed, than when unemployed." For not to be employed in the turmoil of this world, was to be employed in his own soul; and in his loneliness, He, Whom unknowing he worshipped, and felt after, "if haply he might find Him," drew him secretly to Himself. A heathen spoke of "the retreat which restored him to himself.[m]" It was a heathen who[n] gave this Lenten rule, "I went aloof not from men only, but also from business, and especially mine own. Hardly must the body be dealt with, lest the soul miserably perish. Despise all which a superfluous labour would add but to deck thee out. Think that in thee nothing is marvellous except the soul, to which, being great, nothing is great." Truly! for so great is the soul, that Heaven and earth could not content it, since it can contain Him, the Maker of Heaven and earth, indwelling it by Love.

Ye will not shrink, brethren, from that, to which nature itself calls you, your own soul secretly bids you, God Himself by His Promises allures you; oh how much more by His secret Presence there! "The secret of the Lord is with them that fear Him;" a secret, inward converse with the soul, full of consolation and thrilling joy, as a man speaketh with his friend. But secret converse calleth for a secret ear and a hushed soul.

Until, in silence, ye enter into that sacred loneliness, ye know not whither ye are going. In loneliness a man knows himself and his God. Enter there with Him, and, by His Grace, thou wilt not come forth as thou goest in. As thou wouldest not, in a tempest, be tossed about without compass, neither sun nor stars appearing; so trust thyself no longer to the sea of this troublesome world, not knowing whether thou art indeed, year by year, reaching nearer towards the haven where thou wouldest be. As thou wouldest not leave thy worldly affairs unexamined, lest they go to ruin, be as faithful with thy soul. If thou hast not yet, review

[l] Scipio Nasica ap. Plutarch.

[m] "Mihi me reddentis agelli." Horace Ep. i. 14.

[n] Seneca Ep. 7. ad Lucil. c. 8.

once, under the eye of God, thy life as a whole, and see whither it has been and is tending. Bear, in the Presence of God, to know thyself. Then seek to know for what God sent thee into the world; how thou hast fulfilled it; art thou yet what God willed thee to be; what yet lacketh unto thee; what is God's Will for thee *now;* what chiefly hinders thee from inward peace; what one thing thou mayest *now* do, by His Grace, to obtain His Favour, and approve thyself unto Him. Say to Him "Teach me to do Thy Will, for Thou art my God," and He will say unto thy soul, "Fear not; I am thy Salvation." He will speak peace unto thy soul; He will set thee in the way; He will speak to thy soul "good words and comfortable words;" He will bear thee above things of sense and praise of man, and things which perish in thy grasp, and give thee, if but afar off, some glimpse of His Own unfading, unsetting, unperishing, Brightness and Bliss, and Love. Only, by His Grace, take with thee one earnest purpose, to desire to know one Will of God for thee, and to do it.

If, at all times, God calleth us to be alone with Him in this sacred season, when He, with such unutterable Love, suffered for us; if He, Who loved us all one by one, upon the Cross, and thought of us then, our many grievings of Him, and how He would at last melt our hearts and win us to Himself, calleth us ever at this time to sit under His Cross, and there to long to be healed by Him, and to love Him, how much more now! Since stillness is ever fitting at the season of the Passion, how much more when His Hand, in some secret purpose of His chastening Love, is so heavy upon those whom with us He redeemed![o]

It is a blessed provision which the chief pastor of the Diocese[p] has made, in opening, day by day, these Houses of God, for secret prayer to Him. Here, where he has admitted us so often to pour out our sorrows before Him, here, where in our deep penitential litany and confessions, He

[o] The famine of 1847.

[p] London. The recommendation to the Clergy to open the Churches for an hour before the service, was then (Lent 1847) recent.

has heard our cry for mercy and repentance; here, where He has fed us with "the Bread of Life" and made us forget our sorrows in "the pledges of His Love," let us, apart from the din of the world and its interruptions, in union with that sacred loneliness of our Redeemer in the garden for us, anew, in penitence, seek Him.

But if this may not be, it needeth not change of place to be alone with God. We departed not from God, if we ever did depart, with our feet, but with our affections.[q] He is ever near us, if we be near Him. If we turn to Him, or pray Him to turn to us, He, Who turneth us, Himself turneth unto us. He is present, if we open our eyes to behold Him. He is more inward to us than our very souls, for He is within the soul; the very Life by which it lives, the Power whereby it thinks of Him, the Love wherewith it loves Him. Withdraw thy thoughts from the world, and He will stand revealed before thee; pluck out the right eye, which would gaze on and love that which offends Him, and He will cleanse thine inward eye, that thou shalt behold Him; pray Him to close thy ears from hearing words of vanity, and He will open the inward ear of the heart, that thou mayest hear His Voice, and it is sweet, and know His Voice, and follow Him, and "He will give thee eternal life, and none shall pluck thee out of His Hand." Whatsoever thou doest, hush thyself to thine own feverish vanities, and busy thoughts, and cares; in silence seek thy Father's Face, and the Light of His Countenance will stream down upon thee. Business, and labour, and toil, these only shut out the Voice of God, when they enter into the heart, and take it up and close it. It is the Promise of God, in the Gospel, "Thou shalt hear a Voice[r] behind thee, saying, This is the way, walk ye in it, when ye turn to the right hand and when ye turn to the left."

More than they of old may we well commune of Him when we "sit in the house, when we walk by the way, when we lie down, and when we rise up.[s]" Use a sacred diligence to be with God, and He will, in all things, speak to thee.

[q] S. Augustine. [r] Is. xxx. 21. [s] Deut. xi. 19.

He will make a secret cell in thine heart, and when thou enterest there, there shalt thou find Him. And if thou have found Him there, all around shall reflect Him, all shall speak of Him, and He speak through all. Outwardly thou mayest be doing the work of thy calling; inwardly, if thou commend thy work to God, thou mayest be with Him in the third Heaven. "Say not in thine heart, Who shall ascend into Heaven? (that is, to bring Christ down from above), or who shall descend into the deep? (that is, to bring up Christ again from the dead). But what saith it, The word is nigh thee, even in thy mouth and in thy heart?[t]" Give thyself to Him, and a crowded street may be a solitude, in which thou mayest be alone with Him. As, even in this house of prayer, when the heart is not set on God, it is often away, while the body is here, so may the body be with thy works, and thy soul with God. Was not thy Lord called not a "carpenter's son" only, but "the carpenter?[u]" to teach thee how One, in Human Flesh, and doing common human deeds, might still be in the Bosom of His Father? Did not St. Paul and the Apostles work with their own hands, while they were preaching the Gospel? Or think you, whatever the beloved Apostle was doing, his soul was ever absent from Him Whom he loved? Whatever ye do, do it to the glory of God, and ye may even be the more with God, because ye are doing it. David "was following the ewes, great with young ones," a shepherd, when God taught him, "the Lord is my Shepherd," and "took him" to be the shepherd of His people. Amos was a herdman and a gatherer of sycomore fruit, when the Lord took him, as he followed the flock, and the Lord said unto him, "Go, prophesy unto My people Israel." The Apostles were fishermen, when our Lord said unto them, "Follow Me, and I will make you fishers of men." And so even in our own days, there have been those like any of the poorest of you, who while sweeping the streets, were sustained in their daily weariness by thoughts on the golden streets of the Heavenly

[t] Rom. x. 6.—8.

[u] S. Mark vi. 3.

Jerusalem.[x] And for this very cause did our Lord choose for His parables things of every day sight, that all things of sense might speak to us of Himself and the things of the Spirit.

One thing only deafens us to the Voice of God, untunes all, sets us out of harmony with all, that we should not, in all things, feel the thrill of His Love, behold the earnest of Heaven, "our hearts burn within us," and He talk unto us by the way, and our eyes be opened, and we behold Him,—sin. Labour by His Grace to cleanse away this, pray Him to cleanse it with His Precious Blood, commend thyself morning by morning to Him, do thy daily work unto Him, and He will be with thee, as with Adam, in the garden, and thy daily labour shall again be a dressing and keeping of the Paradise of God, where He shall walk with thee. Yea, He hath promised[y] "the Tabernacle of God shall be with men, and He will dwell with them, and they shall be His people, and God Himself shall be with them, and be their God."

Above all, treasure any season in which God Himself maketh thee lonely. When He brings thee back into thyself, seek not to go forth out of thyself. Whether it be by sickness, or by bereavement, or by any other sorrow, by want of the sympathy of the world, by distresses which make the heart sick and faint, go not forth out of thyself, but with the Prophet, stand in loneliness "upon thy watch, and set thee upon the tower;" dwell in Him, Who "is a most strong Tower to all them that put their trust in Him;" wherein the righteous runneth and is safe; and "watch to see, what He shall say unto thee, and what thou shalt speak, when thou art reproved," and He, while He reproves thee of sin, will shew thee His Righteousness, and "be gracious unto thee" and say, "deliver him from going down into the pit, I have found a Ransom." "He will allure thee and bring thee into the wilderness, and speak unto thy heart." He will fence thee round, that

[x] "Do you think," one was overheard to say to his fellow, "that I could go on thus, but for thinking of the 'golden streets of the City Above?'"

[y] Rev. xxi. 3.

nothing outward break in upon the sacred stillness of thy soul, which seeketh to be hushed in Him. Where He is, is great peace. Learn to commune with Him in stillness, and He Whom thou hast sought in stillness, will be with thee when thou goest abroad. Go not abroad out of thyself, and He will not depart from thee. He cometh not to us, to leave us, if we would detain Him with us. Gather thyself from time to time in thyself; recall to thyself, "Whose am I? for whom am I doing this? how would God have me do it?" Lift up thine eyes to the holy "Pattern shewed thee in the Mount," even His, "Who came not to do His Own Will, but the Will of Him Who sent Him." Thy Redeemer, Who would work all thy works in thee, will gather thee up wholly into Himself, all thy thoughts, words, and deeds, that they be thought, spoken, done in Him.

His visitations are seasons of Grace. Miss we not, for our own souls, any. So shall joy spring out of sorrow, abundance out of want, comfort out of desolation, hope out of hopelessness, rest out of trouble, life out of death, from brief "afflictions" an "eternal weight of glory." God shall speak to our hearts, and our hearts shall say unto Him, "Thy Face, Lord, will I seek;" and He Himself shall be the Strength of our hearts now in this "valley of the shadow of death," Himself, "Who filleth all things," shall, "in the land of the living," and "the Brightness of His Presence," be our Portion for ever.

SERMON XIV.

BARABBAS OR JESUS.

PALM SUNDAY.

St. Matthew xxvii. 21.

"*The governor answered and said unto them, Whether of the twain will ye that I release unto you? They said, Barabbas.*"

Can it then be? So soon changed? Can it be that they who to-day cried "Hosanna to the Son of David," shall within a few days, choose Barabbas? Is it then indeed come to this, that they should not only destroy the Holy One and the Just, but desire a murderer "to be released unto them," prefer the blood-stained to the Redeemer, the son of Belial to the Son of God? Are these they whom the Pharisees and Chief Priests feared, when perceiving that He had spoken a parable against them, "they sought to lay hands upon Him?" Are these they, who said, "All which John spake of this Man is true;[a]" who said of Him, some "that He was John Baptist, some, Elias, some, one of the old prophets risen again;[b]" but all, even while they knew Him not, counted Him to be "mighty in word and deed;" Whom "all men sought,[c]" "came unto Him, stayed Him, that He should not depart from them;[d]"

[a] S. John x. 41. [b] S. Luke ix. 19. [c] S. Mark i. 37. [d] S. Luke iv. 42.

"pressed upon Him to hear the Word of God,[e]" "an innumerable multitude, insomuch that they trod one upon another.[f]" And now, at last, after the raising of Lazarus from the dead, "the world was gone after Him,[g]" and they received Him on this day as Him for Whose Coming and Redemption all their forefathers had looked, and "rejoiced and praised God with a loud voice, for all the mighty works that they had seen, saying, 'Blessed be the King that cometh in the Name of the Lord, peace in Heaven, and Glory in the highest.[h]'" He it is Whom the people so hung upon, that the accusation to Pilate was, "He stirreth up the people, teaching throughout all Jewry, beginning from Galilee unto this place;" "He perverteth the people;[i]" "Whom they would come and take by force, to make Him a king,[k]" so that even Pilate appealed to their former hopes, and said, "Shall I crucify your King?" And when the Chief Priests, at last, would destroy Him, they "sought[l] how they might take Him by craft, but said, Not on the feast day, lest there be an uproar of the people." And now, so relentless is their hate, that they prefer a robber and a murderer.

Great indeed, is the seeming change, and in any way an aweful picture of our nature. Unlike, indeed, is the voice which echoed the prophecy of old "Blessed is He that cometh in the Name of the Lord, Hosanna in the Highest," and the voice, which, because they knew Him not, fulfilled it in condemning Him; "Away with Him, away with Him, crucify Him." Unlike, indeed, are the branches of the trees, and the Cross; the palms, and the thorns; the being borne in triumph, and the sinking under the Cross we laid upon Him; the spreading the garments before Him, and the stripping Him of His Own. More aweful indeed were it, could real love be changed into real hate, could men be at one moment disciples of Jesus, at another His crucifiers. True disciples, indeed, they could not be. But could they, then, have no imperfect belief? and can one who has such an imperfect belief, not

[e] S. Luke v. 1. [f] Ib. xii. 1. [g] S. John xii. 19. [h] S. Luke xix. 37, 38.
[i] Luke xxiii. 2, 5, 14. [k] S. John vi. 15. [l] S. Mark xiv. 1, 2.

afterwards crucify Him? We would fain say it could not be. Alas! do not the consciences of many of us bear witness that it has been? Nay more; if we trust that it cannot be, and are confident in that trust, it would be in ourselves.

What did these Jews? St. Peter bears witness to them that what they did, they did ignorantly.[m] Our Blessed Lord Himself, on that ground, pleads for their forgiveness with His Father, "Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do." Yet what they did was indeed, as we know, aweful. On such as have not repented it has been visited to this hour. His "Blood hath been upon them and their children." What woe, when the Blood of the Redeemer hath been upon them, not to cleanse and to save, but to destroy! It, which was the Price of their salvation, hath rested upon them, scattered them, made them "an astonishment, and a byeword, and a curse, and a reproach" unto this day, and shall unto the end. Accursed, indeed, and sorrowful exchange was it! They chose darkness instead of Light; a destroyer for the Saviour; death instead of Life; a robber of others for Him Who gave Himself for us all; the blood-stained for Him Who shed His Own Blood for us; one all-defiled for One All-Pure. We have said nothing; words cannot utter the intense Humiliation of the Ever-Blessed Son of God, Who vouchsafed thus to be compared with one of the most brutal of his race. He Who came to restore to us a more than Angel nature, to Deify our nature by His Own Indwelling, is weighed, as it were, in the balance, with one who had made it a devil's and a brute's nature, and such an one is preferred to Him! O miserable sinfulness of our sins! which needed that He Who humbled Himself for us, to become Man though without sin, should be, by us, not "numbered with the transgressors[n]" only, but beneath them.

But when we have conceived all which we can of the misery of such a choice, is it not our very own, what we have, most of us, again and again made, perhaps in the very

[m] Acts iii. 17. [n] Is. liii. 12.

same way? To choose wilfully a mortal sin, is it not, as far as in us lies, to choose one far worse than Barabbas, whose instrument Barabbas was in his murders, and the Jews in their choice; and our selves, if we "make our members the instruments of unrighteousness," what is this but to choose Barabbas, and destroy Jesus?

All of life is one great warfare. Every thought, word, and deed is a portion of it. All the history of our whole race, from Adam's fall until our Lord shall, at His Coming, destroy Anti-Christ with the Spirit of His Mouth, is one long attempt of the evil one to set up his authority in the place of God's, and to dispute His Sovereignty over His creatures. On the one side God offers us His Will, that we should will as He wills; and that, since His Will is all Good, we should find in it our perfection, be like Himself, be His own representatives on earth, "holy as He is Holy," "perfect as" He, our "Heavenly Father, is Perfect," and partake of His Goodness, Love, Peace, Purity, Truth, Sovereignty over ourselves, His assured and abiding Unchangeableness, being held fast by Him. On the other side, Satan offers us our own will, to claim to ourselves, out of God, all which God would give us in Himself, a counterfeit, slavish freedom of the will, to have no other lord, to have all from ourselves, power, wisdom, man's respect, pleasures, riches, love, as and how we will, for ourselves, and not from God. On the one hand God offers us His Own calm Consolations, His secret Intercourse with the soul, His Peace abiding in it, His Own Indwelling; on the other, Satan offers us a giddy whirl of passions, corruptible pleasures, excitements, feverish joys, and alas! he hides from us therewith his own indwelling and mastery. God offers us Eternity of Bliss, "Pleasures for evermore," in Him; Satan so prolongs the present with busy thoughts, and schemes, and anticipations, as to hide from us an eternity of woe with him. All time is one history of this one manifold choice. Every evil deed, since Adam's fall, has been belief in Satan and disbelief in God, a choice of Satan, his service, his wages, his kingdom, his sins, and his everlasting doom, instead of the glad obedience,

the Beauty of Holiness, the sweet Harmony, the everlasting Glory of the Ever-Blessed God. Even heathens, from the relics of Paradise, knew of this choice. They pictured to themselves man, at the outset of life, standing where two ways parted, Pleasure alluring him to "a way full of all ease and sweetness" Virtue, with a holy majesty, calling him to present toil, and an inheritance with God. And they unknowing! They knew that they made an evil choice, they owned of themselves sorrowfully, "I know and approve what is best, I follow what is worst.[o]" "I knew what I ought to be; unhappy, I could not do it." They knew what they chose, but not whom they chose, or Whom they denied.

More fearful is the contest in Israel, because they knew more. "They chose," Scripture[p] says, "new gods." "If it seem evil unto you to serve the Lord," says Joshua, when his own warfare was accomplished, "choose you, this day, whom you will serve; but as for me and my house, we will serve the Lord.[q]" "How long halt ye between two opinions?" says Elijah; "if the Lord be God, follow Him; but if Baal, then follow him.[r]" They, too, had their pretexts, to smooth their consciences; and when they said of the calf, "these be thy gods, O Israel," Aaron proclaimed "To-morrow is a feast to the Lord;[s]" and Jeroboam, when "he made Israel to sin," "ordained a feast, like unto the feast that was in Judah.[t]" Yet they did choose and they did refuse; and so, in each choice, they were guilty of a two-fold folly and sin; they chose whom they should have refused, and refused Whom they should have chosen. "My people," saith God,[u] "have committed two evils; they have forsaken Me, the Fountain of Living Waters, and have hewed them out cisterns, broken cisterns, that can hold no water." "They changed their Glory into the similitude of a calf, which eateth hay.[x]"

[o] Video meliora proboque, deteriora sequor. Ovid. Met. vii. 19. Scibam ut esse me deceret, facere non quibam miser. Plaut. Trinumm. iii. 2. 31. "Since he who sinneth willeth not to sin but to do aright, it is plain that what he willeth, he doeth not, and what he willeth not, he doeth." Arrian Epict. ii. 26.

[p] Judges v. 8. [q] Jos. xxiv. 15. [r] 1 Kings xviii. 21.
[s] Ex. xxxii. 5. [t] 1 Kings xii. 32. [u] Jer. ii. 13. [x] Ps. cvi. 20.

Darker still and more evil was the choice, when Holiness Itself, "God, was manifest in the Flesh." "This is the condemnation, that Light was come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than Light, because their deeds were evil." There is an ignorance which excuseth; but there is also an ignorance of those already condemned. In one sense, Satan himself knew not Whom he destroyed. The Mystery of the Incarnation was hidden from him; else he had not dared to tempt, nor would he, by slaying "the Holy One," have destroyed his own kingdom, and forfeited his "lawful captives,[y]" our race. St. Paul says, "Whom none of the princes of this world knew," that is, "the princes of the darkness of this world," Satan and his fellows, whom the world worshipped; else "they would not have crucified the Lord of Glory." Ignorance which knows not the light is pardoned; ignorance which sets itself against the light, condemns itself. And so the nearer the Light came, the more was ignorance their wilful choice, the more deadly and hopeless that choice. The more His Miracles of Mercy shewed Who He was, the more embittered grew their opposition, the more their ignorance was the fruit of their sin. Their first choice involved the second. They chose unholiness, "the praise of men," the works of the flesh, their evil deeds;[z] and therefore they could not believe. They could not choose Him, Whom in deeds they denied.

But His Godhead was still veiled in the flesh. His Glory was not yet revealed, "the Spirit was not yet given." More deadly the choice became, when the weakness of His Human Nature was taken up in the Glory of His Divine, and He was "declared[a] to be the Son of God with power, according to the Spirit of Holiness, by the Resurrection from the dead."

What, then, must it be now, when, for so many centuries, God has borne witness to the blessedness of choosing Him as our Portion for ever; when we are "compassed with so great a cloud of witnesses;" when, not Patriarchs only and Prophets, but Apostles, Evangelists, Martyrs, Teachers,

[y] Is. xlix. 24. [z] S. John iii. 19.; v. 44.; viii. 9. [a] Rom. i. 4.

ST. ALBERT'S COLLEGE LIBRARY

Saints, all, of every age, and tongue, and people, and nation who have been perfected, young and aged, boys and virgins, the early-perfected and grey-haired holiness, the poor and they who have made themselves poor for the Kingdom of Heaven, call us by their faithful lives and peaceful deaths, beckon us, as it were, from Paradise, and tell us "We know Whom we have believed; Whom we sought, (yea, Who sought us), we have found; Whom we chose we have; 'one thing we asked of the Lord,[b] this we have desired, to behold the fair Beauty of the Lord and to visit His Temple.' And now we dwell in His Courts, and behold His Face, and are filled with His Love, Whom, not seeing, we believed and loved."

Yet the same choice continues still. All, throughout the whole world, is one choice between God and Satan, Christ and Barabbas. We know not indeed what we do; and so, again and again, our Blessed Lord intercedes for those who deliver Him to His foes. But whenever a choice is given, if we have but any fear that we are choosing amiss, if we do what we suspect to be wrong or worse, if we say wilfully what we think better unsaid, what do any, in fact, but choose Barabbas? Hence the deep, deadly wound of the first marked childish sin, which lives so long in the memory, and haunts it. It was its first marked choice of evil, and, if so, though unknowingly, of the evil one. Hence the evil of some subtle sin, which it perhaps knows not to be sin, only it knows that, were its parents by, it would not do it. It has made an evil choice; and that choice cleaves to it, perhaps, through years of helpless strife and misery. The first evil choice is the parent of all which follows. It has chosen Satan instead of God; and now, before it can again choose aright, it must undo that first choice, and will that had been all unchosen which it ever chose out of God.

We never can make any real progress in holiness, we can hardly take the very first step, we shall be constantly slipping backwards, until, by God's Mercy, we have this stamped upon our souls, that we are ever anew making, that we must

[b] Ps. xxvii. 4.

in all things make, this choice. There is, in every thing, a better and worse, a good and an evil to us. If we choose good, we choose God, Who Alone is Good, and is in all things good; if we choose evil, we do in fact choose the Evil one. There are degrees of choice; as there were degrees and steps in the rejection of our Lord. Yet each led on to the next. Each hardens for the next. "No one ever became at once[c] wholly vile," is even a Heathen proverb. But there is no safety against making the very worst choice, except in the fixed, conscious, purpose, in all things to make the best. The last acts are mostly not in a person's own power. They "who compass themselves about with sparks,[d]" cannot themselves quench the burning. They who make the first bad choice, are often hurried on, whether they will or no. Each choice, so far, involves the whole character. The one question of life or death before us, is, "whom we will obey," God or Satan. "His servants ye are whom ye obey,[e] whether of sin unto death, or of obedience unto righteousness." The one choice is manifoldly repeated. The roads part asunder slightly; yet, unmarked, the distance between them is ever widening, until they end in Heaven or in Hell. Each act of choice is a step toward either. Either we are striking more into the narrow way, or parting from it; we are, by God's Grace, unbinding the cords by which we are held, or we are binding them tighter. The character deepens unconsciously; and at last, in man's sight, and but for some mighty interposition of God, it becomes fixed; because it has all along been secretly following or resisting grace, and so choosing God, or rejecting Him. And who knows how much countless, deadly ill, there may not be in these repeated acts of choice? Who, when he looks back on any portion of a past misdirected life, can imagine the amount of sin, through which it became what it was? It seems, and is, well-nigh all sin, because it has not been choosing God for His own sake, and has been choosing self and evil. Who can imagine the intensity of malice which may lie in, again and again, slighting what seem little calls, when each such

[c] Nemo repente fuit turpissimus. Juv. ii. 83. [d] Is. l. 11. [e] Rom. vi. 16.

act is a setting at nought the Grace of God? Deeply wounded as many of us may be, we can often scarcely feel the real malignity of those, to us, slighter sores. Rather should we look at lesser sins by the light of the greater. All have the one bitter root of evil in them. It is but enlarged, that we may see it more thoroughly. The glass which enlarges to our sight what before seemed a smooth surface, and shews it to us so coarse, or the intricacy of its texture, changes not its structure, but enables us to see it. So murder or adultery shew us only more vividly what, in its root, all hatred or love, out of God is; all hatred of any but the evil one, or any love or desire to be beloved out of God.

It is, indeed, a mournful sight, brethren. It is a bitter memory to think that we have so often chosen out of God. But we can never amend our choice, unless, in bitterness of soul, we own that it has been amiss. We can never come to true penitence, unless we learn the intense evil of the manifold wrongness of our choice. God seems sometimes to allow some who, in His Mercy, finally are saved, to fall into gross sin, which shocks even them, that it may cast back its light on all the misery which prepared for it, but which they felt not till then. In one act, persons see a whole life. One deep act of selfishness may awaken a person to see that self has ever been his one real end; one lie may shew him, whither all his idle excuses or smoothing of faults were verging; one unfeeling deed, how he has been deadening his own affections; one sore fall through vanity, how he has ever been seeking, all through life, a wrong reward, the praise of men instead of the praise of God.

Hard is it to own this, that all has to be undone and begun anew, that the whole choice is to be reformed; and therefore it is hard, truly to turn to God and be saved. We would readily own imperfections, single faults, infirmities, falls. But that all life should have been in a wrong direction, that we should have been really tending towards Hell, while we hoped we were aiming Heavenwards, it must be some very humbling blow or great Grace of God which can teach

us this. And yet, in whatever degree, we must with truth say, that praise of man, or human affection and sympathy, or getting on in life, or any satisfaction from this earth, or to pass smoothly through life, has been our main aim and spring of action, how can we say that Christ was indeed our choice? And if not, who must have been? Yet more, if, while our character was fair, and men spake well of us, and we gave no scandal nor fell into grosser sin, still, whenever our besetting temptation came, we yielded to it. What else is this than, so often as the choice is given us, to listen to the suggestions of evil spirits or of evil men, stirring us up, that we should ask for Barabbas and destroy Jesus?

And this is a still nearer, even more perilous likeness to that sin, which, at first, seems almost beyond belief. The very mystery of the sin in the Jews, who first followed Christ and then demanded His Death, is manifoldly fulfilled now also. They followed Him not altogether feignedly, yet selfishly; not out of love to Himself, but because He healed their sick, or "because they ate of the loaves and were filled;" or because they hoped He would be their earthly king, and "restore the kingdom to Israel." But selfish love is often real hate. Who think they love others, yet secretly love themselves, will hate them if they are thwarted. Amnon thought he loved Tamar; how soon was "the[f] hatred wherewith he hated her, greater than the love wherewith he loved her." Self-love which chose our Lord, when they hoped He would be their king, rejected Him, when they found in Him no earthly king, and feared the Romans. And so, how often are people themselves, and others, startled by some sudden, scandalous fall. While all things went on smoothly, and no strong temptation came, people have even thought that they loved God. Or in prosperity, people honour God; when He tries them by adversity, "they have no root in themselves, but in time of temptation they fall away." Or in a low estate, they seem humble; changed circumstances do not change them, but shew what they were. Unprovoked, people think themselves

[f] 2 Sam. xiii. 15

calm and self-possessed; they are easy, good-tempered, so long as they are not themselves touched; but anger sleeps and is not dead, upon which the Cross of Christ does not rest. Or they have gone forth, as it were, to meet Jesus, they have done things to honour Him, been active in outward things, but had no care of the inward life. They seemed faithful, until the trial came which reached themselves. Even Judas outwardly followed our Lord, "cast out devils in His Name." One inward corruption, covetousness, destroyed love; at one rebuke, he betrayed his Lord, and "went unto his own place." One unforgiving temper[g] has changed a martyr into an apostate. Excitement as to things of God, has even ended in deadly, degrading sin. Things begun for God end in seeking self.

Men will not think that they so sin; the Jews would not think that Jesus was indeed the Christ. But both crucify Him; and to persuade themselves that they do not, only makes their repentance hopeless. Men desire to do things for Him, and then by some self-deceit seek to obtain for them praise of men; or they would give themselves to God's service, and then become ambitious, as they think, to promote His Glory, and end in becoming worldly. They would love, in God, and end in loving self. What is all this but strictly to go on the way with Jesus, lead Him into the holy city, sing Hosannas to Him, and then prefer to Him, Barabbas?

There is then no safety, brethren, but never to think ourselves safe; Lent after Lent to bind ourselves to Him by penitence; Easter after Easter, to beware lest in earthly joy or relaxation, we betray Him Whom in Lent we sought; morning by morning, to make Him anew, our deeper, only Choice, and pray Him to knit it fast unto Himself; evening by evening, quickly to amend by prayer for pardon and Grace and more earnest purpose, if in aught, through human infirmity, we have chosen amiss.

And now in this Holy Week, if we have ever chosen Ba-

[g] See Ruinart Acta Martyrum. Certamen S. Nicephori A. 260. The Apostate was a priest, Sapricius.

rabbas, and Christ has been, as it were, bound in us, or if, when He would dwell in us, we have, as it were, delivered Him up by our evil deeds, and chosen him who "was a murderer from the beginning" and our own, let us, in sorrow of heart and in silence, behold the fruits of our deeds. The Jews were but the ministers of our sins. If we have, in any degree, crucified Him afresh, should we not, (God forbid!)—but, living in the full light of the Gospel and encompassed by His Grace, what hope have we that we should not, have cried, "Crucify Him!" Our sins they were which nailed Him to that Cross of shame; to cover our defilement, He was stripped; to heal our wounds, He was bruised; to restore to us the lost Image of God, His Divine Face was marred; our transgressions they were, which pierced His Blessed Brow. What if all this we have done again! Then let us cast ourselves at the foot of His Cross, clasp it, although we feel its sharpness; there look up to Him and say, "O Good Jesus, Who for us didst vouchsafe to be rejected, and that Barabbas should be preferred unto Thee, I knew not, oh! I knew not what I did, when I preferred to Thee and Thine Honour, oh, what miseries! Forgive me, cleanse me, heal me, bind me wholly to Thyself, that I may henceforth ever choose Thee, and nothing, nothing out of Thee."

SERMON XV.

CHRIST RISEN OUR JUSTIFICATION.

EASTER DAY.

ROMANS IV. 25.

"Who was delivered for our offences, and was raised again for our Justification."

WONDERFUL indeed, and aweful for its wonder, is man's Redemption; aweful in every part and every bearing of It; the abyss whence we were brought up; the height of Heaven which we hope for; the Holiness of God, from which we were outcasts; the Holy Love which gave His Son to die for us; the Infinity of the Majesty of the Co-Eternal Son, our Redeemer; the Infinity of His Sufferings! Each Festival presents to us a portion of that which is Infinite; and yet each subject of thankfulness which each presents is, in itself, infinite, as issuing from Him Who is Infinite. And yet again, wonderful is this, that He Who said, "Let there be light, and there was light," with Whom to will is to do, (since nothing can resist His Will,) should have condescended, thus slowly, to have brought about His Will. The Creator, when He would act towards man, subjected Himself to time, His Own creature. For four thousand years, He prepared the world for His Coming. He came "once in the end of the world" "to put away sin by

the Sacrifice of Himself;" and even then He accomplished our Redemption, not by one act, but by a course of acts, whereof even the Glory has humiliation. He would not pay the penalty of our sins, without first having "not abhorred the Virgin's Womb;" and when He had "overcome the sharpness of death," He would not at once "open the Kingdom of Heaven to all believers," without first lying in the grave, descending into Hell, rising again, appearing on this earth. Each Act of His must needs be a Mystery; each Mystery has its own proper efficacy. By the Incarnation He took our nature into God, and imparted Divinity to our humanity; by the Circumcision He fulfilled obedience to the law; on the Cross He bore our sins, and by Death destroyed death; in the Resurrection He imparted life to our whole nature; in the Ascension He placed it, in Himself, at God's Right Hand, there to intercede for us; at Pentecost He imparted to the Church, and to us individually in our measure, that Life and those Graces, which He, in His Human Nature, had "received for man," and which as yet dwelt in Him, our Head, only. Of this series of Gifts, this "Day[a] of days," was the earnest. From His Birth, every thing looked on to the Cross; all was obedient Suffering, the herald of that Suffering, wherein the end of His Birth was accomplished. "It was finished." With the Resurrection, began, (if one may reverently so speak,) this new order of events in Glory. The Birth was for Suffering, and Atonement, and Death. The Resurrection was for Life, spreading and expanding Itself on every side; Life first in His Body, now wholly spiritualised and made Life-giving, and then descending upon His Body, the Church, at Pentecost; therein to reach on and take into Itself, whatever refused not entrance to It, embracing all nations and tongues, each sex and age, effacing in us, one by one, if we hinder It not, the traces of our remaining death, and purifying us for that blissful state, where "shall be no more death,[b]" because He shall, in all, be All, Who is Life.

Close then as that Precious Death and Resurrection are,

[a] Christian Year, Easter Day. [b] Rev. xxi. 4.

they have each their own efficacy and distinct gift. That Death paid the Ransom for the whole world, but the world lay, as yet, but in the deeper darkness and sin. In that awful night, when the first-fruits of our Redemption, the pardoned malefactor, was by His Side in Paradise, and He brought the blessed tidings to the righteous departed who had so long awaited His Coming, how lay our earth? Apostles dismayed and perplexed; Peter weeping his fall, and but half-restored; the Blood of the Redeemer resting on the Jews and their children; the Chief Priests seeking to secure the past by further sin; "the whole world,[c]" as before, "lying in wickedness." "The sun" had gone "down at noon[d]" day, withdrawing itself from witnessing man's extremest sin and its Creator's Death. The Mercy of the Redemption had been accomplished, but through the fulness of man's iniquity. The very "bodies[e] of the saints," who were awakened and "arose," were held in still suspense. Not until "after His Resurrection" did they enter "the Holy City and appear unto many." The Countless Price was indeed paid; the ransomed were not as yet set free. They were "yet in their sins." For this Blessed Day it was reserved to bring life out of death, to "bring out the prisoners from the prison,[f]" and "let the oppressed go free,[g]" "to bring in[h] Ever-lasting Righteousness." His Death atoned for us; His Resurrection justifies us.

These two gifts of our Lord, Atonement and Justification, are laid down by St. Paul distinctly as the fruits of those His Acts. "Who was delivered for our offences," to atone for them; "was raised again for our Justification," to justify us. This will probably, to some of us, have seemed different from what we should have expected; and whereas we were accustomed to ascribe all, directly, to His Precious Death, this declares His Resurrection to have been the immediate cause of our very acceptableness in the Sight of God. Yet since Holy Scripture saith it, we shall not, if we are wise, seek to explain away this saying, but rather magnify the

[c] 1 S. John v. 19. Is. xlii. 7. [d] Amos viii. 9. [e] S. Matt. xxvii. 52, 53. [f] Ib. lviii. 6. [h] Dan. ix. 24.

more His Mercy, Who gave us His Son, not only to die, but to rise again for us, that we might die and rise in Him, and we shall joy the more in this our Festival, as not only the earnest of our endless life, but the channel of that Loving-kindness, whereby we have life in God.

What St. Paul declares here, he teaches elsewhere also. "If[i] Christ be not raised, your faith is vain; ye are yet in your sins." He says not merely (as some have explained his words) if Christ be not risen, it hath not been *attested*, no proof hath been given, that His Vicarious Atonement hath been accepted, nor are *we* assured or *know* that our iniquity is pardoned. St Paul says not this, but more, "your faith is vain; ye are yet in your sins;" the world's sin has been atoned for, but the cleansing Blood has not reached to *you*. So now also the whole world is redeemed. He died "for the sins of the whole world,[k]" but the Church is far the smaller part; the greater portion, whatever be their lot in God's untold Mercies hereafter, "is yet in their sins." As, then, St. Paul, in one place, says that our Lord "rose for our Justification," so, in the other, if He has not risen, we "are yet in our sins," that is, unjustified. The Cross, then, did not at once justify us. We may not think of It as alone, because God willed that It should not be alone. Before, all in a manner looked on to It. He was "the Lamb[l] slain from the foundation of the world." Since, all looks back to It; all flows from it. "Worthy[m] is the Lamb that was slain to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honour, and glory, and blessing." Yet such was the Will of God, that It should not by Itself directly convey the Mercies It obtained. What He purchased for us by His Death, He giveth us through His Life. It is our Living Lord, Who imparts to us the Fruits of His Own Death. Death and Life are, by Himself, joined, as parts of His Father's Will, and of His Mercy to us. "Therefore doth My Father love Me,[n]" (He saith, not only, "because I lay down My Life for the sheep," but) "because I lay down My Life

[i] 1 Cor. xv. 17. [k] 1 S. John ii. 2. [l] Rev. xiii. 8.
[m] Rev. v. 12. [n] S. John x. 17.

that I might take It again." And again, "I am He that liveth and was dead, and behold I am alive for evermore, Amen, and have the keys of hell and of death.[o]" He hath the keys of death and hell, by virtue of His Life from Death. As truly, then, as the Death of Christ was the True Remission of our sins, though not yet imparted to us, so truly was His Resurrection our true Justification, imparting to us the efficacy of His Death, and justifying us, or making us righteous in the Sight of God.

Yet Holy Scripture doth not leave it thus, but tells us, manifoldly, how the Resurrection is to us the source of Justification and Life. It was the especial promise of the Resurrection, that our Lord would thereby come into a closer relation with His disciples, no longer to be in outward Presence with them, but to be *in* them and be their Life. "I will[p] not leave you comfortless," He saith, after He had promised them the Other Comforter, Who should "dwell in them and be in them," "I will come to you,—because I live, ye shall live also. At that day ye shall know that I am in My Father, and ye in Me, and I in you. He that hath My commandments, he it is that loveth Me, and he that loveth Me shall be loved of My Father, and I will love him, and will manifest Myself to him." And then, in answer to the question, what meant this manifestation to them only, of which the world should know nothing, He saith, yet more solemnly, "If a man love Me, he will keep My Words; and My Father will love him, and We will come unto him, and make Our Abode with him." In this and other like promises recorded by St. John, the special Gift in store for them, after He should have gone away and the world saw Him no more, was this, that He would return to them in a nearer way, manifest Himself to them, not outwardly, but to their spirits, manifest Himself by His Sacred Indwelling, so that His Life should be their life; and this Indwelling is that of the Ever-Blessed Trinity, the Father in the Son, through the Spirit. "The Spirit," St. John saith, "was not yet, because that Jesus was not yet glorified.[q]"

[o] Rev. i. 18. [p] S. John xiv. 18. [q] Ib. vii. 39.

"A little[r] while, and ye shall not see Me, and again, a little while and ye shall see Me, because I go to the Father." Absent for awhile, by His Death, our Lord promiseth that He would be more closely Present, "*because* He should go to the Father." We should see Him the more, because we see Him not. "I will see you again, and your hearts shall rejoice, and your joy no man taketh from you."

And with this agrees the language in which the blessings of the Gospel are, in such a marked and repeated way, afterwards expressed, that we are *in* Christ Jesus, and that His Spirit dwelleth *in* us; so that there are no words whereby our being, as Christians, is more frequently described than that we are "*in* Christ." But we can be "*in* Christ" only by His taking us into Him by His Spirit. "Know ye not that the Spirit of Christ is *in* you, except ye be reprobates?" Again, as our Lord declared, "I am the Life,[s]" so St. Paul says, having been "crucified with Christ," "it is not I which live but Christ, liveth *in* me.[t]" And of all Christians he says "your life is hid with Christ *in* God," that is, since your life is in Him, the Source whence it streams is unseen, in the unapproachable Light and Glory of the Godhead, where He, your Risen Saviour, dwelleth.

These are indeed, all one Gift, variously applied and spoken of, according to our various needs, or decays, or deaths. It is Life, as opposed to our state of death in sin; Righteousness, whereas we were unrighteous; Sanctification, since we were unholy; Redemption, as Satan's captives; Wisdom, as become brutish; Truth, as in error; but the One Gift in all is our Incarnate Lord, Who is Himself "made[u] unto us Wisdom, and Righteousness, and Sanctification, and Redemption;" "the Way, the Truth, and the Life." He doth not give merely these Gifts as gifts, precious indeed, yet still outward to and without Himself. He is Himself them and all to us. He doth not *shew* us the way, nor *give* us wisdom only, nor *cause* us to be sanctified. He Himself, by the Condescension of

[r] S. John xvi. 16.
[s] S. John xi. 25.; xiv. 6.
[t] Gal. ii. 20.
[u] 1 Cor. i. 30.

His Living Presence in us, *is* our Way to the Father, our Righteousness, and Wisdom, and Acceptableness in Him. These are the Gifts which, as Man, He received, to shed down abundantly on man, through His Risen and Glorified Humanity. Yea, they are all His One Gift, His Ineffable Presence. For where He is, how should there not be acceptableness to God, and Light, and Life, and Glory, and Immortality? For how should not they live, in whom Christ liveth? How should they be in darkness, in whom Christ is Light? How should they not be acceptable before God, who are true living members, parts of His Son in Whom He is well pleased? Yea, St. Paul boldly says, "we are made" not righteous only, but "righteousness," nor righteousness only, but "the Righteousness of God," because, "in Him." "He made Him to be sin for us, Who knew no sin, that we might be made the Righteousness of God in Him.[x]"

And this is the special greatness of His Sacraments, that they are the channels whereby, through Union with Him, He conveys these Exceeding Gifts to us. They are His Death and Life in one. As they flowed from His Side, "the Water and the Blood," at His Atoning Death, so the third "Witness,[y]" the "Spirit," is the Gift of His Life and of His Resurrection. All which we have, we have in Him, by being made members of Him. And members of Him we are made and preserved through His Sacraments. The one engrafteth us into, the other maketh us, what in It is given to the faithful, the Body of Christ.[z] And both have their efficacy from the Resurrection. St. Peter sets forth expressly the "new birth" as the gift of the Resurrection. "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, Who, according to His abundant Mercy, hath begotten us again unto a lively hope, by the Resurrection of Jesus Christ;[a]" and again, "Baptism[b] doth now save us, by the Resurrection of Jesus Christ." And St. Paul speaks, often-

[x] 2 Cor. v. 21. [y] 1 S. John v. 8.

[z] "That, gathered together into His Body, and made His Members, we may be made what we receive." S. Aug. Serm. 7, (57 Ben.) § 7, p. 85, Oxf. Tr.

[a] 1 Pet. i. 3. [b] Ib. iii. 21.

times, of our "having been raised with Christ,[c]" "raised with Him in Baptism,[d]" "through the faith of the operation of God, Who hath raised Him from the dead" "quickened together with Christ, and raised up together, and made to sit together in heavenly places, in Christ Jesus.[e]" And our Lord, in a special way, throughout the sixth chapter of St. John, blends together in the doctrine of the Holy Eucharist, His Own Life, and His Indwelling in us thereby, and our life and resurrection. "I am the Living Bread Which came down from Heaven." "He that eateth My Flesh and drinketh My Blood dwelleth in Me, and I in Him." "As the Living Father hath sent Me and I live by the Father, so he that eateth Me, he also shall live by Me." "I will raise him up at the last Day.[f]"

So, further, St. Paul speaks of the Knowledge of Christ, and of "the Power of His Resurrection," as the fruit of being "found in Him,[g]" and of "the Spirit of Him Who raised up Jesus from the dead dwelling in[h]" us, and of "the exceeding greatness of His Power to us-ward who believe" being "according," or conformable "to the working of the might of His Power which He wrought in Christ, when He raised Him from the dead,[i]" in all cases, bringing our life close to the Resurrection, and shewing how the Same Spirit, whereby His Body was raised, is communicated to us, and that because we are *in* Him, taken into Him by His Indwelling Spirit, and having the Spirit because "in Him."

This then is the sum of what Holy Scripture teacheth many ways. All Salvation, Forgiveness, overcoming of death, restoration to Life, Oneness with God; all treasures of Wisdom, and Mercy, and Righteousness, and Holiness, lay in His Atoning Blood; but that they might be applied to us, He, in Whom they were, must come to us and take us into Himself. What in Himself He is, That to us He becometh, by dwelling in us, that we may dwell in Him.

[c] Col. iii. 1. [d] Ib. ii. 12. [e] Eph. ii. 5, 6.
[f] S. John vi. 51, 56, 57, 54. [g] Phil. iii. 9. 4.
[h] Rom. viii. 11. [i] Eph. i. 19, 20.

And of these Gifts, His Resurrection was the pledge and beginning. It was the earnest, that that Same Spirit through Which His Holy Body was raised, should be diffused through that whole Body which He purposed to join to Himself, the Head. It was the commencement of that, of which the day of Pentecost was the fulfilment; and thus our weekly Festival is, at once, that of the Rising of our Lord, and His Coming to us by the Spirit.

On the Cross, our Lord gave Himself for us; through the Resurrection He giveth Himself to us. On the Cross, He was the Lamb Which was slain for the sins of the world; in the Resurrection, that Body Which was slain, became Life-giving. Before, as the Flesh of the Word, It healed the bodies which touched It; now It imparted life to the soul[k]. As St. Paul says, "the last Adam was made a quickening Spirit;[l]" to give life to the world, to all who should become members of that Body. Through the Incarnation He is, in this way also, the Mediator between God and man, that, as in His Sacred Person, the Divine and Human Natures are for ever united, so through His Risen and Glorified Humanity, those qualities, which are communicated to His Human Nature, by It flow on to us. He gave Life to that Sinless Flesh Which He took, that that Life might thence pass into all, by making them members of that Body.

Hence in Holy Scripture, the Body of Christ is, as well the Body which He bare, and Which He offered, and Which in the Holy Eucharist He gives to believers, and which believers are. "We being many are one Bread and one Body, for we are all partakers of that one Bread.[m]" They who are faithful, by His amazing Condescension, become what they receive, the Body of Christ.[n] As His In-Deified Man-

[k] See S. Chrys. and S. Cyril in Petav. de Incarn. i. 2.; and S. Cyril ib. vi. 17, ad Anathem. xi.

[l] 1 Cor. xv. 45.

[m] 1 Cor. x. 17.

[n] "He willed that in His Own Body and Blood should be our Salvation. But whence did He commend His Body and Blood? From His Humility. For had He not been humble, It were neither eaten nor drunken. See then humility, in

hood is not absorbed or lost in the Ocean of His Divinity, although filled with It, so doth He yet take the Church into Himself, a mystical Body; He is, by the Holy Spirit, its Living, Informing, Vivifying Principle, purifying and making resplendent with Grace Ineffable those who are its true members.

This then is the Joy and Gift of our Easter festival, our very Risen Lord Himself. To the Church it is yearly true, "The Lord hath risen indeed, and hath appeared to Simon." Before, all was laid up for us, but we had it not. By the Resurrection is the Gift of the Spirit and Engrafting into Him; by it is "forgiveness[o] of sin, and removal of punishment, and Righteousness, and Sanctification, and Redemption, and Adoption as sons, and Brotherhood with Christ, yea, Oneness with Him, and Eternal Inheritance," because all these are in Him, and by It we become partakers of Him and of all which is His. Yea, this is the bliss of all our Festivals, that they not only shadow out a likeness and conformity between the Head and the members, our Redeemer and us on whom His Name is called, but there is, through the Power of His Cross and Resurrection, a real inworked conformity, a substance and reality. "Whatever," says St. Augustine,[p] "was wrought in the Cross of Christ, in His Burial, in His Resurrection on the third day,

that man ate the Bread of Angels; that Word by which the Angels live from everlasting, which is equal to the Father, did man eat. He emptied Himself, that man might eat Angels' Food, taking the form of a servant, and made obedient unto death, the death of the Cross, that now, from the Cross, the Body and Blood of the Lord might be commended to us, a new Sacrifice." S. Aug. in Ps. 33, Enarr. 1, § 6. See more at length p. 346, Oxf. Tr. "We are fed from the Cross of the Lord, because we eat His Body." Ib. in Ps. 100, § 9. "The Blood which in their phrenzy they shed, believing, they drank." Serm. 77, 4. See "The Holy Eucharist a Comfort to the Penitent," p. 19, Note x. &c. "The faithful know the Body of Christ; if they neglect not to be the Body of Christ, let them become the Body of Christ, if they will to live of the Spirit of Christ. Of the Spirit of Christ liveth not save the Body of Christ. The Body of Christ cannot live save of the Spirit of Christ. Hence the Apostle Paul, setting forth to us this Bread, saith, 'We, being many, are One Bread, One Body.' Oh, Sacrament of Piety! Oh, Sign of Unity! Oh, Bond of Charity! Whoso willeth to live, hath where he may live, hath whereof to live." In S. Johan. Tr. 26, § 13.

[o] S. Chrys. Hom. xi. in S. Matt. § 6, p. 153, Oxf. Tr.

[p] Enchirid. c. 53, Short Treatises, p. 118, Oxf. Tr.

in His Ascension into Heaven, and Sitting down at the Right Hand of the Father, was so wrought, that by these actions, not words only, of mystical meaning, should be figured out the Christian life enacted here below. For, on account of His Cross, it was said, 'They who are Christ's have crucified the flesh with the desires and lusts;' of the Burial, 'We have been buried with Christ by Baptism into death;' of the Resurrection, that 'as Christ rose from the dead through the Glory of the Father, so we also should walk in newness of life;' for the Ascension and Sitting on the Right Hand of the Father, 'If ye then be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth on the Right Hand of God the Father.[p]'" We have been made partakers of His Precious Death, Burial, Resurrection, Ascension, for where He is, there are we, in pledge and earnest, if we be His; thence He looks down upon us, fixing our failing eyes to look up to Him; thence, by the secret sympathy between the Head and the members, He draws us upward with longing, to be like Him; the first-fruits of our spirits are already there; and He is with us, raising what yet lingereth here; we are with Him there, since, if we be His, we are in Him; He is with us here, for, by His Spirit, He dwelleth in us, if we love Him.

Would to God, my brethren, that bitter thoughts need not trouble these our Easter joys! Would that we had all remained what we were made! that we had all cherished the Life imparted to us, obeyed the Holy Spirit Whereby He sealed us, and Which He put within us! Would that any had always done so! Would that all of us were even now so doing! Then would the Festival of the Resurrection be indeed a season of triumph, of large accessions of His Spirit, Which the vessels of our souls would be fitted to receive. Then need the mention of our great Gifts awaken in us no misgivings or thoughts of shame. Alas, in how few must it not now kindle both! Since it is true that as our Good Lord "died for our sins," so He "rose" to justify us, by taking us into Him, and He dwelleth in us, by His Spirit;

[p] Col. iii. 1.

where have been the fruits, it may be, during many years of our lives? In some perhaps how meagre, in all our lives hitherto, whether lately begun, or advanced, and, perhaps, in either case, near their close! Where are now the fruits which betoken that Justifying, Sanctifying Presence? We have been justified freely; we hope, in the end, to be found in Him; accepted in Him. But what is our state now? Ever since our Baptismal Birth, that Life and Life-giving Presence has been growing or decreasing in us. "Nothing abideth at one stay." Day by day, and year by year, as we struggled resolutely against what was evil in us, or through thoughtlessness and wilfulness allowed the vanities of the world, "the lust of the eye, the lust of the flesh, or the pride of life," to master our wills, and distract our minds from God, that Gracious Presence has increased or diminished in us. Some, it is to be feared many, in every congregation, have, by some enduring or hideous sin, at some time, well nigh extinguished it. And how are we now? Blessed they who know of themselves,—(for the deepest misery is, that it is to be feared the largest portion of those once made partakers of His Death, and heirs of the Resurrection, are, with eyes half or wholly closed, going, step by step, slowly, it may be, but steadily, on the broad path to destruction). Blessed they, whoever they are, who have been brought to the knowledge of themselves, to see whether the life of God in them is growing or has been decaying, or, they may fear, has been stifled and well nigh extinct. Blessed they and they only, whencesoever they come, whether with the freshness of early Baptismal Life; or, by Faith, making their own the Privileges which they, without faith of their own, received, or, strong in the Spirit, or with the heavy sighs of penitence, fanning the dim flame which He would not quite quench. Blessed whosoever, with the incense of prayer and the oil of charity, is feeding that Sacred Flame, which descended from Heaven, and mounteth thither again. Blessed even they who feel of themselves, really and truly, not in words only, that they are "poor, and miserable, and blind, and naked," so that this their misery have indeed brought them to Him

Who counsels us "Buy of Me gold tried in the fire, that thou mayest be rich, and white raiment, that thou mayest be clothed, and that the shame of thy nakedness do not appear, and anoint thine eyes with eye-salve, that thou mayest see.[q]" For He truly Alone is the Medicine to heal our wounded souls; He Alone is the True Riches; He Himself the Robe of Righteousness, and Holiness, and Immortality, which will fold around our scars, and wounds, and shame, and sin, and give us perfect soundness, healing all our diseases, and "covering" us with His own glorious "Light, as with a garment.[r]" He will not, as in the days of His Flesh, only speak the word over the leper, "I will, be thou clean;" but, leprous though we be, and loathsome in our own sight, He will not shrink from us, as though He could be polluted by us. If we, at last, pray to "love Him and keep His Commandments," He will come unto us, Himself cleanse, by His Body, our sinful bodies, Himself wash our souls with His most Precious Blood.

And if these, too, be blessed, how much more blessed they who, while the affections have yet the first glow He gave them, and the feelings are not yet seared by the drying, withering love of the world, the heart yet untainted, the imagination yet fresh, the memory unchoked with vanities, give themselves up to their Lord Who gave Himself for them, to love Him wholly, love Him only, with a whole heart, and bright resolve, and joyous service, bright with the early dew of their Baptismal morn, so to remain His for ever, His for a while here, our Only Joy amid this fast-fleeting, unreal, shifting, scene of vanity; His for ever, among the choicest jewels of His Treasure, nearest to Him in the Radiance of His ineffable Bliss, to Whom they ever clave, most filled with His Presence, in Which they ever lived, Which they ever loved.

Yet whatever we be, my brethren, there is for us one course only, one Way, one Hope, one Life. However we may have fallen, our hope is yet sure, if, at the last, we be found in Him. But we are in Him, only if we "love Him

[q] Rev. iii. 11. [r] Ps. civ. 2.

and keep His Commandments." Weak though our faith still be, and cold our love, and we wearied often and downcast at present weakness, the fruit of past sin, and the Countenance of our God often, as it seems, shrouded from us, still if there be in us increased humility, and watchfulness, and obedience, and victory over our besetting sin, His Justifying, Saving Presence is, we may hope, with us, and will, if we pray for It, abide with us to the end. In whatever degree we have faithfully used the past blessed solemn season, for retirement into ourselves, being alone with God, humiliation and self-restraint, we shall have gained a blessing. See we that we lose it not now. Angels around His Throne above are still singing "Halleluia;" the Church below still echoes their joy, "Christ is risen from the dead, and become the First-fruits of them that slept.[s]" See we that our joy be a joy in Him. The restraints of Lent, wherein we found such rest, are removed from us. It is easier to serve God amid austerity than joy; easier, amid our first burst of Easter happiness, than in our continued joys. Yet it is a time of joy, and He Who has, we trust, sanctified our sorrow, can in its turn sanctify our joy. Only lift we up our hearts to Him; recollect we that our joy is in our Risen Lord; rise we, from time to time, out of our earthly joys, in thought to Him, our Heavenly Joy; be we not fixed on earth by our joy in the Resurrection. Our first waking thoughts, I trust, were thoughts of Him Who rose as our First-fruit; our highest Feast this Day is a Feast with Him, a being filled with Him. Ere the visible Sun rose, "the Day-Star arose," I trust, in watchful "hearts." Him ye sought, not now (as St. Mary[t] Magdalene), "not knowing where they had laid Him," with tears as for One lost, but with joy, as in One found, and yourselves, who had been lost, found "in Him." Ye sought Him, not to embalm His lifeless Body, but longing to offer to Him what He will accept "as a sweet-smelling savour," yourselves, with the fragrance of good works, which, "without[u] money and with-

[s] 1 Cor. xv. 20. [t] S. John xx. 13. [u] Is. lv. 1.

out price," ye have bought of Him. Ye, would keep this "Feast of feasts" as "dead unto sin and alive unto God through Jesus Christ our Lord," risen from the tomb of earthliness, and earthly desires, and sins, and breathing with Him the freshness of the Morning of the Resurrection and of Endless Life in Him. Ye would sing your Easter Hymns and Halleluiahs "with Angels, and Archangels, and all the company of Heaven," as longing to learn, with them, the New and Endless Song "kindled and burning upwards towards everlasting joys, that so, in true gladness, ye may, in your Heavenly home, joy unceasingly in that joy, whereof ye now cherish the shadow in the way." Go not away, forget not, lose not out of sight, in the Festival refreshments of these poor bodies, Him, Whom through forty days of preparation, ye have sought, and, I trust have found. He visiteth from time to time, as the Apostles, in a nearer way, those who wait for His Coming, and pray Him to cleanse their hearts, that they may be prepared to receive Him. But the refreshment of His Visitation passeth not away from those who wait for Him in the upper chamber, and cherish the remembrance of Him. He Who arose through the unopened tomb, and needed not that the great stone laid upon it should be rolled away for Him, and passed through the closed doors, will enter Unseen into the hearts which close themselves and all their powers and senses against all His enemies, that He Alone may come in at His Will and dwell there.

Part we not with Him then, Who as He gave Himself for us, so now continually giveth Himself to us. Hold we Him fast. He will gladly "abide with us," if we pray Him to "tarry with us." He will make Himself known to us in the Breaking of Bread. Reverence we Him; reverence we ourselves, whom He so vouchsafes to visit and to hallow, and keep we His commandments; for "Blessed are they that do His commandments, that they may have right to the Tree of Life;[x]" even to Him, the True "Tree of Life, which is

[x] Rev. xxii. 14.

in the midst of the Paradise of God," here with Healing for our infirmities and our hidden Life, in Eternity, Himself Life Eternal and the Fulness of Joy; Himself the Never-Failing Fountain of the Love wherewith we love Him; Himself the Ever-filling, Over-flowing, All-encompassing Object of our love.

SERMON XVI.

THE CHRISTIAN'S LIFE IN CHRIST.

EASTER-DAY.

I. Corinthians xv. 22.

"For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive."

All which our Lord has is ours, if we are indeed His. As Man, He received Gifts, that He might give them to men. To Him, as Man, though God, "was given all Power[a] in Heaven and in earth," that He might bestow on His all things in Heaven and earth; that all things, in both, might work and serve together to the good of His Elect. As Man, He received the Holy Spirit, that He might again dwell in man, clothe us with the Robe of supernatural Grace and Holiness, which we lost in Adam, and were found naked. For our sakes He sanctified Himself, that we also might be sanctified by the Truth. He sanctified His Human Nature by His Indwelling Godhead, that so He might sanctify our nature by Himself, Who is the Word of Truth. For us the Spirit of God rested upon Him with His Sevenfold Gifts, "the Spirit[b] of Wisdom and Understanding, the Spirit of Counsel and Might, the Spirit of Knowledge and True

[a] S. Matt. xxviii. 18. [b] Is. xi. 2. Collect in Confirmation Service.

Godliness, the Spirit of Holy Fear," that through Him It might stream down upon all His members, as the holy oil which was poured upon Aaron's head "went down to the skirts of his clothing,[c]" hallowing, and giving a sweet savour to all his body. For us, the Spirit was "given without measure to Him,[d]" that from Him It might be parted to us His members, as we severally need, or are found worthy. Our's were, what in the past Holy Season we dwelt upon, and while we dwelt upon, they became again our's—our's were His Wounds, Stripes, Bruises, His Crown of Thorns, His Bloody Sweat, "His Tears, Groans, and Cry," His Body and Blood, His Life and Death. "For our transgressions was He bruised; by His Stripes are we healed." His Bloody Sweat sanctifies the woe pronounced on man, "in the sweat of thy brow shalt thou eat bread.[e]" His Thorns were our sins; and thenceforth the thorns our human nature bears do but let out our festering evils, while they pierce us. He wept, that we might weep no more; but God should be "very gracious to us at the voice of our cry.[f]" Through His Groans are those Unutterable Groanings heard, whereby "The Spirit maketh Intercession for us, according to the Will of God.[g]" By that Cry did He, with His Own Blessed Spirit, commend our spirits also to the Father. For us, "though He were a Son, yet learned He obedience by the things which He suffered;" that "being made perfect," He might become[h] "the Author of Eternal Salvation to all them that obey Him." His Shame is our glory; His Blood our ransom; His Sweat our refreshment; the Streams from His Side our Sacraments; His Wounded Side our hiding-place from our own sins, and Satan's wrath; His Death our life.

And what, then, on this "our triumphant Holy Day,[i]" should His Life be? What but the Sealing to us of all which He had wrought for us? What but the bursting of the bars of our prison-house, the restoration of our lost Paradise, the opening of the Kingdom of Heaven, the

[c] Ps. cxxxiii. 2 [d] S. John iii. 34. [e] Gen. iii. 19.
[f] Is. xxx. 19. [g] Rom. viii. 27. [h] Heb. v. 8, 9. [i] Easter Hymn.

earnest of our Endless Life, the binding of the strong man, and letting us, his lawful prisoners, free, the bringing in of Incorruption, the Conquest, in the Head, of the last enemy, that he may, one by one, be conquered in us too, and the death of our bodies may be the deliverance from "this body of death," our souls' perfected life?

Can there be more than this? There can. The text unfolds to us a yet deeper Mystery, that all this is to us "in Christ," "In Christ shall all be made alive." The Endless Life, which they shall live who are counted worthy of it, shall then not be a life such as men seem to live here where our true life is unseen, as if we were so many creatures of God's Hand, each having his existence wholly separate from his fellows, upheld in being by God, yet, as it seems, apart from God, having his own wills, affections, tastes, pursuits, passsions, love, hatred, interests, joys, sufferings. Our life then shall not be, as it seems here, and as it truly is in the ungodly, separate from God, and in the good indistinctly and imperfectly united with Him. It shall be a life "in God." "*In* Christ shall all be made alive." We shall live then, not only as having our souls restored to our bodies, and souls and bodies living on in the Presence of Almighty God. Great and unutterable as were this Blessedness, there is a higher yet in store,—to live on "in Christ." For this implies Christ's living on in us. These two are spoken of together in Holy Scripture. "He that dwelleth in love, dwelleth in God, and God in Him,[k]" and "he that keepeth His commandments dwelleth in Him, and He in him;[l]" and in the service for the Holy Communion, we pray that "we may so eat the Flesh of Christ and drink His Blood, that we may evermore dwell in Him, and He in us." For we can only dwell in God by His Dwelling in us. To dwell *in* God is not to dwell *on* God only. It is no mere lifting up of our affections to Him, no being enwrapt in the contemplation of Him, no going forth of ourselves to cleave to Him. All this is our seeking Him, not His taking us up; our stretching after Him,

[k] 1 S. John iv. 16. [l] Ib. iii. 24.

not our attaining Him; our knocking, not His Opening. To dwell in God must be by His Dwelling in us. He takes us out of our state of nature, in which we were, fallen, estranged, in a far country, out of and away from Him, and takes us up into Himself. He cometh to us, and if we will receive Him, He dwelleth in us, and maketh His Abode in us. He enlargeth our hearts by His Sanctifying Spirit which He giveth us, by the obedience which He enables us to yield, by the acts of Faith and Love which He strengthens us to do, and then dwelleth in those who are His more largely. By dwelling in us, He makes us parts of Himself, so that in the Ancient Church they could boldly say, "He Deifieth Me;[m]" that is, He makes me part of Him, of His Body, Who is God.

This is the great difference between us and the brute creation. They are not capable of the Presence of God. He made them; He extendeth His Providence over them. "His Mercy," Scripture saith, "is over all His Works,[n]" encompasseth, enfoldeth them all. "He feedeth the young

[m] See Note h. on S. Athanas. against the Arians, ii. 21, p. 380, Oxf. Tr. "If He be not an Object of worship, how doth He Deify me through Baptism? If He be an Object of worship, how is He not to be adored? If to be adored, how not God? One hangeth from the other, in a golden truly, and saving, chain. And from the Spirit have we the regeneration; from the regeneration, the re-formation; from the re-formation, the knowledge of the Dignity of Him Who re-formed us." S. Greg. Naz. Orat. 31, § 28. "I would venture to say somewhat, O Trinity! be pardon to my boldness, for the soul is in peril. I, too, am an image of God, of the Glory Above, even though I be placed below. I cannot be persuaded that I am saved by one in co-honour with myself; [if the Holy Ghost had been a creature only, as the heretics blasphemed.] If the Holy Spirit be not God, let Him first become God, and so Deify me, His co-equal! But now what mockery of Grace, yea, rather of Those Who bestow the Grace, to believe in God, and return godless! Why enviest thou me perfect regeneration? why makest thou me, who am the Temple of the Spirit, as God, the dwelling-place of a creature? [by asserting that the Holy Ghost was such.]" Ib. Orat. 34, § 12. "I will ask thee, doth it befit a nature made and created, to Deify those who are not gods? Never can a creature be imagined which can Deify; but be it referred to God Alone, Who infuseth into the souls of the holy the participation of His Own Property, through the Spirit, whereby also, having become conformed to Him Who is, by Nature, the Son, we are called gods, and sons of God. If, then, it is greater and a more excellent thing than belongeth to the nature of a creature to be able to Deify through Himself, who can count the Holy Spirit among things created, or how can that be called created which maketh gods?" S. Cyril de Trin. Dial. 7, p. 644.

[n] Ps. cxlv. 9.

ravens which call upon Him;[o]" "not a sparrow falleth to the ground without your Father.[p]" Yet their spirit goeth downwards to the earth, not upwards to God Who gave it.[q] He careth for them as His creatures, and may have something in store for them.[r] He giveth the horse strength; the hawk flies by His Wisdom; He saveth "man and beast.[s]" He teacheth the ox to "know his owner, and the ass his master's crib.[t]" He teacheth the stork to "know her appointed times, and the turtle and the crane and the swallow to observe the time of their coming,[u]" so that we marvel at their wisdom, and often learn of their skill. But He hath not made them such to dwell in them.

Still more. With man himself, made in His Image, His "Spirit will not always strive;[x]" He will not ever dwell in him. This is *the* difference, from which all others flow, between true Christians and all besides, heathens, or even the ancient people of God, that Christians, if they remain such, or are restored to be such, are "*in* Christ.[y]" This was the special Gift which Patriarchs and Prophets saw afar off. For the sake of this, Abraham rejoiced to see the Day of Christ. They saw it, "but not nigh." They had the knowledge of His Laws; God dwelt with them as He dwelt with no other nation. "What nation was there so great, who had God so nigh unto them?[z]" But

[o] Ib. cxlvii. 9. [p] S. Matt. x. 29. [q] Eccl. iii. 21.
[r] See Bp. Butler's Analogy. I. 1. p. 25, Oxf. Ed. [s] Ps. xxxvi. 7.
[t] Is. i. 3. [u] Jer. viii. 7. [x] Gen. vi. 3.

[y] "In the beginning God, taking dust from the ground, and having formed man, breathed into his face the breath of life; and what is the breath of life but the Spirit of Christ, Who saith, 'I am the Resurrection and the Life?' But when the Holy Spirit, Who could hold together and form us to the Divine Character, departed from the human race, the Saviour again bestows this upon us, bringing us back to that our ancient dignity, and forming us anew, after His Own Image. Wherefore Paul also saith, 'Little children, of whom I travail in birth again, until Christ be formed in you.' But if so, how was He in the Prophets? In the Holy Prophets there was, as it were, a certain rich illumination and a light of The Spirit, leading onward, which could guide them to the conception of things to come, and the knowledge of things hidden. But in those who believe in Christ, we say, boldly, that there is not a mere guiding light from The Spirit, but The Spirit Itself dwelleth in them. Whence, also, we are called Temples of God, although no one of the Holy Prophets was ever, at any time, so called." S. Cyril in S. Joh. L. v. c. 2, p. 474.

[z] Deut. iv. 7.

although "*nigh* unto them, in all things they called upon Him for," He dwelt not *in* them. *Among* them He appeared visibly in the Pillar of Fire, the Burning Bush, as the Angel of the Covenant, the Captain of the Lord's Hosts, in the Glory which filled the Temple; but still without them because visibly, and visibly because without them. They had a visible Theocracy; God was visibly their King; and so of them it was not said, "the Kingdom of God is within you.[a]"

This is the great present fruit of the great Mystery of Godliness, "God manifest in the Flesh,[b]" that He, by sanctifying our flesh, might fit for His Indwelling all who would receive Him; might come secretly to us, to be hereafter in us manifested for ever. It was a commencement, a practising, as it were, of what was to be for ever. God the Word dwelt in that Holy Human Nature which He took, that thenceforward He might, by a real Indwelling, (a real Spiritual Union,[c] although not a personal union like that with the Man Christ Jesus), sanctify our nature, and knit it on, in Himself, to God for ever. Holy as they were, He dwelt not *in* him whom He called His "Friend,[d]" "the father of the faithful,[e]" or in Moses, "faithful in all his house,[f]" as He dwelleth in the faithful Christian. For so He held it fitting, that God the Holy Ghost should first dwell in His Own Sinless Human Nature,[g] and so ever dwell in

[a] S. Luke xvii. 21. [b] 1 Tim. iii. 16.

[c] "The Spirit Himself, by Himself, worketh in us, sanctifying and uniting us to Himself, and, by our conjunction with Himself, maketh us partakers of the Divine Nature." S. Cyr. Thes. p. 352.

[d] 2 Chron. xx. 7.; Is. lxi. 8.; S. James ii. 23. [e] Rom. iv. 11.

[f] Heb. iii. 2.—5.

[g] "Him," [The Holy Spirit] "He promised, through the Prophets, to pour out in the last days upon servants and handmaids, that they might prophecy: whence, also, He came down upon the Son of God, being made the Son of Man, in Him accustoming Himself to dwell in the human race, and to rest with pleasure in men, and to dwell in the creature of God, working the Will of the Father in them, and renewing them from their decay into the newness of Christ." S. Iren. 3. 17. 1. "For He receiveth His Own Spirit, and takes It, as far as He is Man, but gives It to Himself, as God; and this He did for us, not for Himself, that this having first been begun from Him and in Him, this Grace of Sanctification might so pass through to the whole race. For as through the transgression and disobedience in Adam, as in the first-fruits of our race, the nature was condemned to death, bearing

man; restoring to him, through Himself, what he had lost, through the fall.

Wonderful has it often, doubtless, seemed to us, in reading the Old Testament, how God vouchsafed to be seen by, speak to, man; how He visited Patriarchs, made known to them His Counsels, consulted, as it were, with them about the fate of an ungodly city, would not "hide from Abraham

in one, that first man, 'Dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return,' in like way, through the Obedience and Righteousness of Christ, as He came under the law, although, as God, being Lawgiver, the Blessing and Life-giving, through the Spirit, was to extend to the whole nature. For The Spirit re-forms to incorruption that which was corrupted by sin, and remoulds to newness of life that which, through negligence, had become old, and was passed into decay." S. Cyril, in S. Joh. L. 11. p. 991. 'Therefore the Holy Spirit descended upon Him from Heaven, in the Form of a Dove, that we may know again, that, as in the First-fruits of the renewed nature, The Spirit descended first on Christ, in that He appeared as Man capable of Sanctification, but we do not say that Christ became Holy, as to the Flesh, when the Baptist saw The Spirit descending upon Him, for He was Holy in His Mother's Womb,—Luke i. 35, 'The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee, and the Power of The Highest shall overshadow thee, therefore also That Holy Thing Which shall be born of thee shall be called The Son of God.' But this sight was given to the Baptist as a sign. Yet we hold, that the Flesh was sanctified through The Spirit, the Word, Who is by nature Holy, and is of The Father, anointing His Own Temple, in Himself, after the likeness of other creatures." Ib. p. 993. "It is written that He breathed on His disciples, saying 'Receive ye the Holy Spirit.' Must not, then, any firmly believe that The Son being, by Essence, Partaker of all the Natural Goods of God The Father, hath The Spirit in the same way as The Father, not adventitious, nor from without, (for this were madness to think,) but as each of us containeth within himself his own spirit, and poureth it forth from his inmost parts? Wherefore Christ breathed in a bodily way, shewing that, as the spirit goeth forth bodily from the human mouth, so also His Own Spirit is poured out from the Divine Essence, in a Divine way. Since, then, He is The Spirit of God The Father and of The Son, how should They not have the same Power, severally and together? For if any say that He is not of the Essence of God, how could the creature, by receiving The Spirit, be a partaker of God, and in what way should we be called, and be, Temples of God, if we received a created or foreign spirit, and not rather That of God? And how 'partakers of the Divine Nature,' according to Holy Scripture, when we partake of The Spirit, if He is to be numbered among things made, and doth He not rather come forth to us out of the Divine Nature Itself, not ministered to us by It, as something foreign, but, so to speak, becoming, as it were, a Quality of Deity in us, and dwelling in the Saints, and abiding for ever, if, cleansing the eye of their understanding by all seemliness, and by unwearied zeal for all virtue, they preserve the Grace in themselves." Ib. p. 810, 811. "I live," He saith, "for I am, by Nature, Life, and have shewn you that My Temple is living, but when ye yourselves also, being of a corruptible nature, see yourselves living by Likeness to Myself, then, indeed, shall ye know, and very clearly, that being, by Nature, Life, I have joined you, through Myself, to Him Who is, by Nature, Himself also Life, God the Father, making you, as it were, partakers and sharers of His Incorruption. For

that thing which He should do,[h]" would, at his prayer, have reprieved even it, "for ten's sake;" took Moses apart into His Secret Presence, accepted him as an intercessor for his whole people, when ready to destroy them, "had not Moses, His servant, stood before Him in the gap, lest He should destroy them;[i]" how He spake to Elijah, in "a still small voice;" joined Himself to the Three Children, in the furnace; revealed Himself to the Prophets, in dreams and visions, directed them all their lives long, put His Word in their mouths, ordered their single acts.

Great is it that He should thus speak with man, as with a friend, talk with him Face to face, know him and call him by his name, as one with whom He was familiar and one familiar with Himself, cheer him when wearied, and bid him "Fear not, for I am with thee.[k]" Great is it that He, the Lord of Heaven and Earth, the Infinite, All-wise, All-good, Who "upholdeth all things by the Word of His Power,[l]" should narrow Himself, (so to say), so as to speak, as One with one, with the human soul which He had made; that He, Whom no space holds, Who contains in His Infinity all which ever was, is, or shall be, all which could be, even if they never shall be, should, as it were, Eye to eye, and Mouth to mouth, make Himself known to one, such as ourselves. Prophets, Patriarchs, and Apostles, seem to us, as it were, different beings from ourselves, that they should have been brought into such aweful, tender nearness to Almighty God.

I, by Nature, am in The Father. For I am the Fruit of His Essence, and the Truly Begotten, being in Him and of Him, Life of Life; but ye are in Me, and I in you, in that I have appeared as Man, and have made you 'partakers of the Divine Nature,' by setting My Spirit in you. For Christ is in us, through The Spirit, transferring that which was born for corruption into incorruption, and translating it from death, to That Which hath no death. Whence also Paul saith, 'That He Who raised up Jesus Christ from the dead, shall also quicken your mortal bodies, through His Spirit, Which dwelleth in us.' For although The Holy Spirit proceedeth from The Father, yet He cometh through The Son, and is His Own, for all things are from The Father, through The Son." S. Cyril in S. Joh. L. 9. fin. pp. 823, 824. See also in S. Joh. 17, 23, 6. xi. c. 12. p. 1001, quoted at length in the Sermon, "The Holy Eucharist a Comfort to the Penitent," p. 17.

[h] Gen. xviii. 17.

[i] Ps. cvi. 3.

[k] Gen. xxvi. 24.

[l] Heb. i. 3.

Greater are the wonders of the Gospel than those of the Old Testament; more marvellous the greatness of the Love shewn to one little child, than all that tender guidance wherewith He ordered the steps of Abraham, who left all to follow Him. "Verily, I say unto you," saith our Lord, "Among them that are born of women there hath not risen a greater than John the Baptist; notwithstanding he that is least inthe Kingdom of Heaven is greater than he.[m]"

Closer is the nearness of Almighty God to those who will receive Him, than when He walked with Adam in Paradise, or seemed to sit with Abraham, or to speak to Moses Face to face, or when the Angel in Whom His Presence was, wrestled with Jacob, or when One, in the Form of the Son of God, was with the Three Children in the fire; yea, nearer

[m] St. Matt. xi. 11. "What, too, shall we say, when we hear our Saviour Christ say, 'Verily, verily, I say unto you, among them that are born of women there hath not risen a greater than John Baptist; notwithstanding he that is least in the Kingdom of Heaven is greater than he.' But what is the Kingdom of Heaven? The Gift of the Holy Spirit; according to that, 'The Kingdom of Heaven is within you.' For the Spirit tabernacleth in us, through faith. Seest thou, then, how He prefers the least in the Kingdom of Heaven to all 'born of women.' And let none think that we diminish the glory of the Saints or their excellence, or say that even those of least esteem are better; for we say not so; for the excellence of their conversation is incomparable. Truly great, indeed, was the blessed Baptist, and most distinguished by every virtue, and so advanced towards the bounds of Righteousness which can be in us, that nothing can be beyond it, but, being thus, he besought Christ, saying, 'I have need to be baptized of Thee, and comest Thou to me?' See how, being perfect, as far as man might be, he prays to be re-created and regenerated through The Holy Spirit; see how he yields the preference to those who are regenerated, in that he saith, he hath yet need of this. For if he had not been better if baptized, why doth he pray and persuade Him to baptize? But if he knew that he should be in a better state when Baptism came, how does not he place those already baptized in the higher place? Christ then saith that 'the least in the Kingdom of Heaven is greater than John Baptist' himself, that is, that *he* is so who has just been baptized, and has as yet no excellence of attainment, in this only; that the blessed Baptist was born of a woman, but *he* hath been born of God, according to the Scripture, and, hath become a partaker of the Divine Nature, and is now the Temple of God. There was then in the Prophet the Spirit, for the purpose of prophecy, but now, through Christ, He Indwelleth in believers, beginning first in Himself, when He became Man. For, as God, He hath Him Inseparably and Substantially belonging to Himself and His Own, but He is Anointed for our sakes, and is said to receive the Spirit as Man, not obtaining for Himself, but for human nature, the participation of the Good Things of God. When, then, the Divine Evangelist saith, 'The Spirit was not yet, because Jesus was not yet glorified,' let us infer that he signifieth the entire and perfect Indwelling of The Holy Spirit in man." S. Cyril in S. Joh. L. 5, c. 2, pp. 474, 475.

yet, than when, in the Flesh, His disciples did eat and drink with Him, and went in and out with Him, or Mary sat at His Feet, or His Mother carried Him in her arms, or St. John lay in His Bosom, or St. Thomas thrust his hand into His Side. For all this sacred, blessed, nearness was still outward only. Such nearness had Judas also who kissed Him. Such nearness shall they plead, to whom He shall say, "I never knew you; depart from Me, ye that work iniquity.[n]" The Christian's nearness He hath told; "We will come unto him, and make Our Abode with him,[o]" in Holiness, Purity, Peace, Bliss, cleansing Love.

It is not a Presence to be touched, handled, seen, heard, felt by our bodily senses; yet nearer still, because it is where the bodily senses fail, where the outward eye cannot reach, the outward ear cannot hearken; but when the outward senses fail, then the inward eye sees a light, brighter than all earthly joy; the inward ear hears His Voice; the inmost soul feels the Thrill of His Touch; the "heart of hearts" tastes a sweetness, "sweeter than honey and the honeycomb,[p]" the sweetness of the love of the Presence of its Lord and its God.

But whether or no He giveth to the faithful soul, to feel its own blessedness, or in whatever degree He maketh the soul to hunger after Him, and so satisfieth the hungry soul with His Own Richness, the inward, unseen, Presence of God in the soul is *the* gift of the Gospel. This is its great, its one all-containing promise.

The Everlasting Son, for our Redemption, took our flesh, to be one of us; He came in our flesh; He cometh by His Spirit, really and truly, to dwell in us. He dwelleth not as He doth in the material Heavens, nor as He sanctifieth this House of God, nor as He did in the Tabernacle, but united with the soul, and, in Substance,[q] dwelling in her, as

[n] S. Matt. vii. 23. [o] S. John xviv. 23. [p] Ps. xix. 10.

[q] "Our Lord Jesus Christ saith, I deem, of every faithful and good person, 'I and The Father will come, and will make Our Abode with him,' and 'In this we know that He is in us, by The Spirit which He hath given us." For a man can have the Richness of the Indwelling and In-Tabernacling of Him Who is by Nature and Truly God, not, if he received His Spirit as something apart and essentially distinct

He did Personally in the Man Christ Jesus. In Him dwelt "all the Fulness of the Godhead bodily.[r]" In Him the Incarnate Word dwelt, becoming One with His Holy Manhood, "by Unity of Person,[s]" by taking It into Himself. In His Saints He dwelleth partially, by the Gift of His Spirit, in different degrees, according to their measure; but still His Union with them is a shadow of that ineffable Union of the Ever-Blessed Trinity, of the mode in which He dwelt in our Ever-Blessed Redeemer. For so our Lord Himself prayeth for them, "as Thou, Father, art in Me,

(from God), but in that he receives That Spirit Which is of Him, and in Him, and His Very Own, and Which hath the like Lordship with Himself, and is so called, and is received as in the Place of The Son, on account of His Sameness by Nature." S. Cyril de Trin. Dial. 7, p. 641. "Again, He saith, 'Lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world;' but He sent to us from Heaven the Comforter, through Whom and in Whom He is with us, and Tabernacleth in us; not pouring into us a spirit alien from Himself, but The Very Own Spirit of His Own Essence, and of That of The Father." P. 642. "But if the Grace through The Spirit were distinct from the Essence of The Spirit, why did not the blessed Moses say clearly that The Creator of all breathed into the living being, when brought into existence, *Grace through* The Breath of Life?' and why did not Christ say to *us*, 'Receive *Grace through* The Holy Spirit?' But in Moses He is called 'the Breath of Life;' for True Life is the Nature of the Godhead, if that is true, that 'in It we live, and move, and have our being.' And by the Voice of the Saviour it is called '*The Holy Spirit*,' He Himself, in Deed and in Truth, infusing and insetting, as an inhabitant, The Spirit in the minds of the faithful, and through Him and in Him, remaking them according to their first Form, that is, according to Himself, into His Own Very Likeness, through Sanctification, and thus bringing us back to that Primeval Image, that is, the Impress of The Father. For the Son Himself is the True and Express Image, accurately expressing the Likeness of the Father, and The Spirit is the pure and natural Likeness of The Son, according to which we too, being formed by Sanctification, are configured after the Very Form of God. And of this the Apostle's word will persuade us, for he saith, 'Little children, of whom I travail again until Christ be formed in you.' But He is formed in us through The Spirit, Who transelements us unto God by Himself. Since, then, we are conformed to Christ, and He Himself is Impressed upon us, and is accurately fashioned in us by The Holy Spirit, as being by Nature like unto Himself, then The Spirit is God, Who conformeth us unto God, not through ministerial Grace, but as bestowing a Participation of the Divine Nature on those worthy of Himself." S. Cyril Dial. 7, pp. 638, 9. "What Love The Lord of all had for man, Paul teacheth, saying, that 'The Love of God is shed abroad in our hearts through The Holy Spirit Which is given us.' If, then, 'God is Love,' as John saith, and He Himself is not different from that which is in Him, (since He is Simple and Uncompounded), and He is shed abroad in our hearts through The Spirit Who dwelleth in us, then The Spirit is God, as dwelling in us in the Place of God." S. Cyril Thes. p. 353.

[r] Col. ii. 9. [s] Athanasian Creed.

and I in Thee, that they also may be one in Us.[t]" And this

[t] S. John xvii. 21. "The Union with God cannot belong to any, except through the Participation of the Holy Spirit, inserting into us the Sanctification of His Very Own Special Nature, (τῆς ἰδίας ἰδιότητος,) and re-forming to His Own Life the nature which fell under corruption, and so bringing back to God, and His Form, that which was deprived of this Glory. For the Son is the Perfect Image of the Father, and His Spirit is the Natural Likeness of the Son. Wherefore, transforming, as it were, the souls of men into Himself, He impresses upon them the Divine Form, and engraves on them the Image of the Supreme Substance of All. Our Lord Jesus Christ then prayeth, not for the Twelve Disciples only, but rather, for all who, in each time, should yield to, and believe their words. . . . . .

"But what then is the Nature of His Prayer? This, 'that they all may be one; as Thou, Father, art in Me, and I in Thee, that they also may be one in Us.' He prays then for the bond of Love, and One-mindedness, and Peace, bringing believers to Spiritual Unity, so that the concurrence in unity, through the universal consent and undissevered harmony of soul, should imitate the Characters of that Natural and Essential Unity in The Father and The Son. Not that the bond of Love and the power of Oneness of mind in us, could have such force, that we should be united as the Father and the Son, expressing by Unity of Essence, the Manner of Their Unity; for Their Unity is of Nature, and Real, and in the very Mode of Being, bnt this is a sort of form of the True Unity. For how can antitypes exactly correspond to Archetypes? For the imitation of the Truth is not the same as the Truth Itself, and though the visible form be the same, yet the difference will be considerable. . . . . .

"Christ taketh the Essential Unity which the Father hath with Him, and He again with the Father, as the picture and type of inseverable friendship, and oneness of mind, and unity which is in harmony of soul, wishing that we also should be in a manner commingled with one another, by the Power, namely, of the Holy and Consubstantial Trinity, so that the whole Body of the Church should be conceived as one, by the union and coming together of the two people to the condition of one perfect man in Christ, as Paul saith, (Eph. ii. 14.—17. 'For He is our Peace, Who hath made both one, and hath broken down the middle wall of partition between us; having abolished in His Flesh the enmity, even the law of commandments contained in ordinances; for to make in Himself of twain One New Man, so making peace: and that He might reconcile both unto God in One Body, by the Cross, having slain the enmity thereby; and came and preached peace to you which were afar off, and to them that were nigh,') which was fulfilled when they who believed in Christ were one-souled with one another, and received, as it were, one heart, through their entire likeness in holiness and obedience in the Faith, and love of Virtue. . . . . .

"We have said above that the unity, through the harmony and oneness of mind and soul of believers, ought to imitate the Manner of the Divine Unity, and the Essential Sameness of The Holy Trinity, and Their perfect Interfusion, (ἀναπλοκὴν). But now we have to show a natural unity also, according to which we are bound up with another, and all with God, not lacking, perchance, the unity in body also, I mean with one another, although we differ from one another in our several bodies, each of us being circumscribed by his own separate person, for Paul could not be, or be said to be, Peter, nor Peter Paul, although, by the mode of union through Christ, both are accounted one thing (ἕν).

"Wherefore, it being confessed that the Unity of The Father, and Son, and Holy

He bestoweth upon them by, Himself, dwelling in them.

Spirit is of Nature, (for, in the Holy Trinity One Godhead is believed and glorified,) let us consider in what way we ourselves also, both with one another and with God, are found to be one thing (ἓν), both bodily and spiritually. The Only Begotten Son then, shining upon us from the Very Essence of God The Father, and having, in His Own Nature, the Whole of Him Who begat Him, became Flesh, according to the Scriptures, mingling Himself, as it were, with our nature, through that Inconceivable Conjunction and Union with this body which is of the earth; and thus He Who is by Nature God, was called and really became a Heavenly Man, not bearing God, (θεοφόρος), according to some who do not accurately understand the depth of the Mystery, but being, in One, God and Man; in order that, having Co-United, as it were, in Himself, things very different by nature or likeness, with one another, He might make man partaker and sharer of the Divine Nature.

"For the sharing and Abiding of The Spirit hath passed through to us also, having received Its commencement through Christ, and in Christ, first, conceived as one of us, that is, Man, and Anointed and Hallowed; whereas, as He appeared from The Father, He is, by Nature, God; Himself, by His Own Spirit, hallowing His Own Temple, and the whole creation which was made by Him, which admits of being sanctified.

"Wherefore the Mystery in Christ was a sort of beginning and way for us also, to share The Holy Spirit and Union with God. For we are all hallowed in Him, as I have said. In order then that we, although different individually, in souls and bodies, each according to his own several peculiarity, might come together and be commingled in unity with God and one another, The Only Begotten contrived a certain way, devised through the Wisdom fitting to Himself, and the Counsel of The Father. For by One Body, that is, His Own, blessing those who believe in Him, through the Mystical Participation, He maketh us con-corporate with Himself and with one another. For who will part asunder and sever from natural union with one another those who are, by One Holy Body, bound together into Unity with Christ? For if we all partake of that One Bread, we are all made One Body. For Christ cannot be divided. Wherefore, also, the Church is called the Body of Christ, and we too, severally, His members, according to the meaning of Paul. For we all, being united with the One Christ through His Holy Body, as having received, in our own bodies, Him, the One and Indivisible, owe our own members to Him rather than to ourselves. But that the Saviour, being set as the Head, His Church is called the Body, as being composed of the several members, Paul will show, (Eph. iv. 14—16. 'That we henceforth be no more children, tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the slight of men, and cunning craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to deceive; But speaking the truth in love, may grow up into Him in all things, which is the Head, even Christ: From Whom the whole Body fitly joined together, and compacted by that which every joint supplieth, according to the effectual working in the measure of every part, maketh increase of the Body, unto the edifying of itself in love.') And that we, who partake of His Holy Flesh, obtain an union in body also with Christ, Paul will bear witness, saying of 'the Mystery of Godliness, (which, in other ages, was not made known to the sons of men as it is now revealed unto the Holy Apostles and Prophets, by The Spirit), that the Gentiles should be co-heirs and con-corporate (σύσσωμα), and co-partakers of His Promise in Christ.' But if we are all con-corporate with one another in Christ, and not only with one another, but also with Himself, Who is in us through His Own Flesh, how are we not clearly all One

Thus, again, is He the Mediator[u] between God and Man, receiving of The Father to impart to us. The Father dwelleth in The Son, and The Son in The Father; and so, Both The Father and The Son dwell in Whom The Son dwelleth, as He saith, "I in them, and Thou in Me, that

Thing, (ἕν), both in one another and in Christ? For Christ is the Bond of Unity, being in Himself God and Man in One.

"But concerning the Unity in Spirit, pursuing the same course of contemplation, we would say again, that we all, having received One and the Same Holy Spirit, are, in a manner, mingled together with each other and with God. For if in us, although being many, Christ inserteth severally in each The Spirit of The Father and His Own, and He is One and Indivisible, we say that He holdeth together in Oneness, through Himself, the spirits, severed as far as they exist in each individually, and making us all, (τοὺς πάντας), as it were, one thing (ὡς ἕν τι) in Himself. For as the Power of the Holy Flesh maketh those in whom it is con-corporate, in the same way the One Indivisible Spirit of God, dwelling in all, bringeth all together into a Spiritual Unity. Wherefore, again, the Divine Paul addresseth us, (Eph. iv. 2.—6.) 'Forbearing one another in love; endeavouring to keep the Unity of the Spirit, in the bond of peace. There is one body and One Spirit, even as ye are called in one hope of your calling; One Lord, One Faith, One Baptism, One God and Father of all, Who is above all, and through all, and in you all.' For One Spirit Indwelling in us, there will be One God, The Father of all, in us, through The Son, holding together, into Unity with one another and Himself, what partake of The Spirit. For that we are co-united with The Holy Spirit, by participation, will be plain thus also. For if, forsaking the carnal life, we once for all give full dominion to the Laws of The Spirit, how is it not indisputable to any one, that having denied, as it were, our own life, and having received the Supernatural Conforming of the Holy Spirit, commingled with us, we are all but removed, as it were, into Another Nature, being not men only, but sons of God also, and Heavenly men, because we have been made partakers of the Divine Nature? We are, then, all one thing, (ἕν) in The Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, one in the Sameness of Temper, and in the Conformation according to Godliness, and the Communion of the Holy Flesh of Christ, and the Communion of One Holy Spirit." S. Cyril in S. Joh. pp. 995—1000.

[u] "Man, being of a corrupted nature, could not otherwise escape death, unless he recovered that ancient Grace, and partook of God, Who holdeth all things together in being, and giveth life, through the Son, in The Spirit, He partook, then, of Flesh and Blood, that is, He became Man, being, by Nature Life and Begotten of That Which is, by Nature, Life, that is, of God, and being the Only Begotten Word of The Father, that uniting Himself to the corruptible flesh, after the Manner of His Own Nature, ineffably and inconceivably, and as He Himself Alone knoweth, He might restore it to His Own Life, and make it, through Himself, partaker of God and The Father. 'For He is the Mediator between God and man,' being, as God, United with God The Father by Nature and of Him, but with men, again, as Man, and having in Himself The Father, and being Himself in The Father. For He is the Express Image and Brightness of His Person, not separated from the Essence of which He is the Express Image, and from which He proceedeth as His Brightness, but being Himself in It, and having It in Himself, and, again, having us in

they may be made perfect in One;[x]" and this through Him, in Whom The Father and The Son are One, The Holy Spirit. For so saith Holy Scripture again, "Hereby know we that we dwell in Him, and He in us, because He hath given us of His Spirit.[y]" And both through the great Mystery of the Incarnation. The Son, as Man, received into Himself the Life of The Father, that He might, with Himself, impart it to us. "As the Living Father hath sent Me, and I live by The Father: so, he that eateth Me, even he shall live by Me.[z]"

This then, as it is the special Mystery of the Gospel, so is it of the Resurrection,—to be "in Christ." This is the greatness of God's Gift in Holy Baptism, that we are thereby "in Christ." This is the new Workmanship of God, that we, having been created, and having marred the Divine Image in us, are "created" anew "in Christ Jesus[a]"—a creation, though but commenced in Baptism, and to be perfected afterwards, yet far greater than the first, and having, like our natural birth, in very infancy, wrapt up in it, the whole, the full-grown being. This is our Justification, that we are *in* Him;[b] this our Sanctification, to be *in* Him;[c] this our Redemption, *in* Him;[d] this our calling to the Eternal Glory of God, "*in* Christ Jesus;[e]" this our hope for those who are departed before us, that they are "fallen asleep *in* Him;[f]" are dead, but *in* Him, "the dead *in* Christ;[g]" this our hope

Himself, inasmuch as He bare our nature, and our body is named the Body of the Word. For the Word became Flesh. But He bare our nature, re-forming it into His Own Life. But He also is in us; for we have altogether become partakers of Him, and have Him in ourselves, through The Spirit. Wherefore, also, we have become 'partakers of the Divine Nature,' and are called sons, having in this way The Father Himself in us, through The Son. And Paul will bear witness, saying, 'Since ye are sons, God hath sent The Spirit of His Son into your hearts, crying, Abba, Father.' For the Spirit of The Son is not different from The Son, at least in Identity of Nature." S. Cyril in S. Joh. L. ix. fin. p. 823.

[x] S. John xvii. 23.

[y] 1 S. John iv. 13. "Were the Spirit of another nature from God, It would not bring about the Presence of Him Who is, by Nature, God." S. Cyril de Trin. L. vii. p. 637. "For God being, by Nature, Holy, the Spirit is, by Essence, Holy, and through Him, and in Him, can one be a partaker of the Holy God." Ib. p. 657.

[z] S. John vi. 57.

[a] Eph. ii. 10.

[b] Rom. viii. 1.; Gal. ii. 17.

[c] I Cor. i. 2.

[d] Eph. i. 7.

[e] 1 S. Peter v. 10.

[f] 1 Cor. xv. 18.

[g] 1 Thess. iv. 16.

in the Day of Judgment, that we "may be found *in* Him;[h]" this our perfecting, that we may be "presented perfect *in* Christ Jesus,[i]" this our endless life, that "*in* Christ we shall all be made alive;[k]" this the consummation of all things, that the blessed Angels who needed not redemption and ourselves the redeemed, as we are in some unknown way one Church now, so shall we visibly be One Body then, when He shall "gather together in one all things *in Christ*, both which are in Heaven, and which are on earth,[l]" and the whole family in Heaven and earth shall be named of Him, and God be All and in all, restoring the harmony which was broken by our fall, and making all one for ever, in endless peace and rest, by dwelling in all, Himself the Life, the Joy, the Will, of all whom He hath made one by taking them into Himself.

And of this, as Baptism is the beginning, and the Resurrection to Life the close, so are they wrought in the self-same way. Through our Lord's Resurrection both are derived to us. He rose as the First-fruits of us, the Earnest of the future harvest of souls, restored to Immortality in Him, and partakers of His Divine Nature, that they, who are His, might rise at His Coming. He had indeed Power to rise again. "I have Power" He saith, "to lay down My Life, and I have Power to take It again.[m]" The Son had Life in Himself. Yet with that Condescension, wherewith He was pleased to have that wrought in Him which He would work in us, and because the Holy Spirit, as Proceeding from Him, is His Spirit, through the Spirit was He raised from the dead. He raised Himself, and God the Father raised Him; and, we are told, He was "declared to be the Son of God with Power, according to the Spirit of Holiness, by the Resurrection from the dead.[n]" "Put to death in the Flesh, He was quickened by the Spirit;[o]" shewing thereby the Co-Operation of the Ever-Blessed Trinity. And so also our own Resurrection is attributed severally to The Father, and The Son, through The Spirit.

[h] Phil. iii. 9. [i] Col. i. 20. [k] 1 Cor. xv. 22. [l] Eph. i. 10.
[m] S. John x. 18. [n] Rom. i. 4. [o] 1 S. Peter iii. 18.

Our Blessed Saviour saith, "Whoso eateth My Flesh and drinketh My Blood, hath Eternal Life; and I will raise him up at the Last Day;[p]" and of The Father and The Spirit it is said, "If The Spirit of Him That raised up Jesus from the dead dwell in you, He That raised up Christ from the dead, shall also quicken your mortal bodies because of His Spirit That dwelleth in you.[q]" O the wonderful condescension and gracious encouragement of our God, so to unite Heaven and earth, God and man, our Lord from Heaven the Everlasting God, and us poor and defiled worms of earth, that what took place in Him should not only be the source of what is to be in us, if we be found worthy, but its very pattern also! So wholly did He become like unto those whom He deigns to call His "brethren![r]" So that St. Paul says boldly, that if there be no Resurrection for us, Christ Himself rose not. "If the dead rise not, Christ is not risen.[s]" So wholly was His Resurrection ours, that God assures us, that He in Whom the Incarnate Word dwelt, rose not, if we, for whom He rose, are not to rise.

And of this Resurrection we have further, (Holy Scripture declares), the earnest and beginning in ourselves already. We have That in us, through which we shall be raised, The Holy Spirit of God. Through His Resurrection, we have a new principle of life in us. By nature we were soul and body; now we are "spirit and soul[t] and body;" and through that Indwelling Spirit shall they who forfeit it not, be raised at the Last Day. "According to His abundant Mercy," saith St. Peter, "hath He begotten us again" (that is, given us our new birth of Himself), "unto a lively hope, by the Resurrection of Jesus Christ, from the dead;[u]" and again, speaking of the way in which we were so born, "Baptism[x] doth now save us, by the Resurrection of Jesus Christ." For being by Baptism "made members of Christ," we are made parts of His Risen Body; and the Spirit which

[p] S. John vi. 54.
[q] Rom. viii. 11.
[r] S. John xx. 17; S. Matt. xxviii. 10; Heb. ii. 11.
[s] 1 Cor. xv. 16.
[t] 1 Thes. v. 23.
[u] 1 S Peter i. 3.
[x] Ib. iii. 21.

dwelt in Him "without measure,[y]" He has imparted to us His members, that It may sanctify us, spiritualize our very bodies here, keep in us the true Life, if we forfeit It not, and so, through that Spirit, shall our dust again be quickened, and we be raised at the Last Day to life.

This is St. Paul's teaching. "Ye[z] are not in the flesh, but in the Spirit, if so be that the Spirit of God dwell in you." We are, here below, placed in a middle state between the two, the flesh, and the Spirit subduing the flesh. We are either being raised above the flesh in the Spirit, or being sunk in the flesh, (as they who walk after the flesh are), and quenching the Spirit. Either the Spirit is imparting a new life to the very body, absorbing the whole man, and preparing soul and body to be wholly spiritual, as after the Resurrection they shall be; or the flesh is mastering the soul, and making it to be itself fleshly, and grieving away the Spirit. They who obey the Spirit, who receive the Spirit of God to dwell in them, although in the body, are, St. Paul says, "not in the flesh, but in the Spirit;" they are encompassed, enfolded, enveloped in the Spirit. The Spirit is penetrating the whole man, and so imparting to the whole Its own nature. As the iron, when placed in the fire, is no longer dark, and heavy-looking, and cold, but transparent, and glowing, and bright, and kindled, and gives out light and warmth, and seems of another nature, so the whole soul and body of him who obeyeth the Spirit of God is in a course of change, becoming, as our Lord says, "full[a] of light," and warmth, and glowing and on fire with love.

The Spirit not only "cometh[b] *upon*" those who are Christ's, as of old, but is *within* them, as St. Paul goes on to say "if so be that the Spirit of Christ dwell in you." And that, not dwelling in them separately, as our souls dwell in our bodies, for God is One, Indivisible, Inseparable, without parts, not such as can dwell one part here and another part there, but, being One, He must make all wherein He dwelleth one.[c] Whence it is said "there is one body, and One Spirit, and

[y] S. John iii. 34. [z] Rom. viii. 9. [a] S. Matt. vi. 22; S. Luke xi. 36.
[b] Judges iii. 10.; 1 Sam. x. 10, &c. [c] See S. Cyril above, pp. 242, 243.

one Baptism;[d]" the One Spirit, imparted through the one Baptism, making those who receive It, one. And thus, again, the Spirit dwelling in man is all one with man dwelling in God. For he cannot be out of God in whom God dwelleth. The Spirit of God, being inseparable from God, by dwelling in man, takes man into God. And since the Three Persons of the Ever-Blessed Trinity are One God, where the Spirit dwelleth, there the Son dwelleth, and the Father dwelleth. As, having said "if the Spirit of God dwell in you," "if any man have not the Spirit of Christ," he goes on to say, as being the same thing, "if Christ be in you.[e]" If the Spirit is in us, then Christ also, Whose Spirit He is, is in us. And since our Lord says "My Father will Love him, and We will come unto him, and make Our Abode with him," there is the whole Presence of the Trinity. So St. Paul declares, "in Whom" (the Lord) "ye are builded together for an habitation of God through the Spirit.[f]" All believers are one, being Indwelt by One; one habitation of the One God, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. "Through the Spirit" they are "in Christ," and, being in Christ, they are the "habitation of God."

And if this Spirit abide in us, how should not the body, so lived in, have life? Yet, for the time, it remains under sentence of death. Even in the regenerate, the flesh, although mastered and in the course of subdual, is not wholly subdued, but craves what is sinful: it is to be mortified, and by death to be restored to life. But whereas it is "dead because of sin," "The Spirit is Life because of Righteousness.[g]" The body, working and tempting to sin, is subject to death; but, within that body, subduing sin and working Righteousness, dwelleth the Spirit, and is, he says, not only life-giving, but "Life," a power of life within the soul, its life, which shall overlive and overcome death. And then follow those other words, "If the Spirit of Him that raised up Jesus from the dead dwell in you, He That raised up Christ from the dead shall also quicken your mortal

[d] Eph. iv. 4, 5.
[e] Rom. viii. 9, 10.
[f] Eph. ii. 22.
[g] Rom. viii. 10.

bodies by His Spirit That dwelleth in you.[h]" How he again unites us with Christ! He says not merely, "God shall raise you from the dead;" so shall He also the wicked; but "He That raised up Christ from the dead shall give life to your mortal bodies also." God The Father, Who raised up our Lord Christ from the dead, seeing His Own Spirit and The Spirit of The Son dwelling in us, shall give life to us, as He raised Him, "because of The Spirit That dwelleth in us."

The Resurrection then of our Lord is not only a pledge of our own; it is our own, if we be His. His Body is a Pattern of what is in store for our's, since we, if His, are a part of It. And so when we read in the holy Gospels, the history of His Appearances after His Resurrection, we may see in them, not only so many proofs of His Resurrection, but so many manifestations of our future glory. As His, after His Resurrection, was a Spiritual Body, not subject to any of the laws of our bodies, but passing through the closed doors; now present, then vanishing; so Glorious in Majesty, that His very Apostles cried out "It is a Spirit;[i]" not recognized by them at first, but known rather by His wonted actions, "the Breaking of Bread," or His Miracles, than in Itself; aweful to flesh and blood; such shall our's be. Nay, they shall be more than His then *seemed*. For His Majesty was then veiled. He appeared not then, as He did to the beloved Disciple, so Glorious as to seem only like what He had been, "*like* to the Son of Man, His Eyes as a flame of fire, His Feet like fine, kindled brass," and he, the Disciple so loving, so loved, "fell at His Feet as dead.[k]" Yet even this appearance was only such as flesh and blood could bear, not as He is, beaming with the Indwelling, Inapproachable Light of the Divinity. He seemed flesh and blood; we shall no longer have flesh and blood, though bodies still: He condescended to eat, we shall feed only on Him, unsated, uncloyed, for Eternity. In Him the Light of the Godhead was veiled; "the righteous," He saith, "shall shine forth, as the Sun

[h] Rom. viii. 11. [i] S. Luke xxiv. 37. [k] Rev. i. 15.—17.

in the kingdom of their Father.[l]" Whatever His Deified Form is, the image of That shall we bear; for the Apostle says "we shall be like Him, for we shall see Him as He is.[m]" Yea, we shall be in God, and God in us, as it saith, "God shall be All, and in all;" and as God is glorified in "the Man Christ Jesus," so is the very end of our Lord's Second Coming, "to be glorified *in* His Saints,[n]" manifesting His Glory in them.

My brethren, since these things are so, we may well stand in awe of our very selves, and the majesty bestowed upon our frail nature. We *should* stand amazed at, and reverence, ourselves, that we, poor frail worms by nature, creatures of this earth, and ourselves creeping along it, and defiled with it, are through our Blessed Lord, joined on to the Divine Nature, are, Scripture says, "made partakers of It," "are temples of the Holy Ghost,[o]" indwelt by the Ever-Blessed Trinity. Rightly, as long as we cherish the feelings given us, do we stand in awe of a Church-yard. We reverence it, because although good and bad lie there, yet there are bodies there, which shall rise to Everlasting Life. Bodies there at rest, even while dissolved, are awaiting the Resurrection. They have been "sown in dishonour, to be raised in Glory, sown in weakness, to be raised in Power, sown natural bodies, to be raised spiritual bodies.[p]" The dust there is full of life. We see it not, though we know it. Yet God sees it. He marks what to our eyes are but grains of earth; each grain is numbered by Him; each speck of holy dust lives, although asleep, guarded by Him, to start up at His Trumpet Call, in spiritual beauty and glory, to Life Eternal. They shall be raised, "on account of the Spirit which dwelleth in them." And therefore we reverence their dust, and the Church-yard which is full of bodies once, at least, so indwelt, and so to be indwelt for ever.

But if these be objects of reverence and awe, how much more ourselves, who are living "temples of the Holy Ghost," in whom, "except we be reprobates," The Spirit

[l] S. Matt. xiii. 43. [m] 1 S. John iii. 2. [n] 2 Thess. i. 10.
[o] 1 Cor. iii. 16.; Ib. vi. 19. [p] 1 Cor. xv. 43, 44.

of Christ dwells;[q] who, unless we have emptied ourselves of the Good Spirit, have each of us, since our Baptism, been the dwelling-place, more or less, according to our measure, of the Quickening Spirit, have been the abode of the Ever-blessed Trinity. My brethren, there is no middle way. We must be the dwelling-place, though we know it not, of the Good or the evil; of the Spirit of God, or of Satan. We must be indwelt; and, if it be not by the Good, it must be by the evil. "Grieve not" away, saith Scripture, "the Holy Spirit of God.[r]" For if the evil spirit find the dwelling-place whence he was cast out, "empty," "he will take to himself seven spirits more wicked than himself, and will re-enter and dwell there.[s]" This it is, which makes the sins of baptized Christians so miserable, that they thereby profane what God had so consecrated,—themselves; offending and grieving away the Holy Inmate, Who had vouchsafed to dwell within them; violating what God had made His Sanctuary, defiling His temple. The Christian cannot be as the heathen, cannot be even as the Jew. He must have a holiness which they have not, must keep himself through the Spirit given to him, from the sins which brought punishment upon them, or he must perish the more miserably, through the very greatness of the Gifts which he despises. "He that despised Moses' law died without mercy; of how much sorer punishment, suppose ye, shall he be thought worthy, who hath trodden under foot the Son of God, and hath counted the Blood of the Covenant, wherewith he was sanctified, an unholy thing, and hath done despite unto the Spirit of Grace?[t]"

Let us then, as we would hope at the Last Day, to "rise to life," and not to "shame and everlasting contempt,[u]" seek and watch and pray, to rise with our Risen Lord now. We must die with Him first, if we would live with Him for ever. If we would that the death of our bodies should not be the entrance into death eternal, we must die to our sins, die daily and daily rise, as our profession is set forth to us

[q] 2 Cor. xiii. 5. [r] Eph. iv. 30. [s] S. Matt. xii. 45.
[t] Heb. x. 28, 29. [u] Dan. xii. 2.

in Holy Baptism, die by daily "mortifying all our evil and corrupt affections," rise again unto righteousness, by "daily proceeding in all virtue and godliness of living.[x]" We shall all rise, but we shall not all be changed. They who have not risen with Christ in the Spirit, by faith here, shall not rise in Him to Glory. They shall *rise*, not to incorruption, but to an immortality of woe, an unfailingness of corruption, "salted with salt" there, because "the salt lost its savour" here; preserved by the fire which preys upon them; indestructible, though for ever consumed; a living death, a continuance of the corruption of the grave, "where their worm dieth not, and their fire is not quenched.[y]" Seek we then, my brethren, while we may, and God's Mercy is open te us, by rising from sin now, to escape this rising to a second death. Seek we to be "dead to sin, but alive unto God, through Jesus Christ our Lord.[z]" Be we careful, in these our Easter joys, that they be a joy in our Risen Lord, not in the things of the flesh, to free us from which He bore those bitter Sufferings. Let not our joy pass into excess, but use we the things of this world soberly, as they whose home is not here, but who look for our Master's Coming. Keep a strict watch over all the entrances to sin, especially all approaches to those deadly sins of the flesh, which, St. Paul tells us, defile the temple of God, whose punishment he declares, "them shall God destroy.[a]"

Our condition is the more aweful on account of the greatness of God's Gifts to us. Our end is, to "bear" for ever "the Image of the Heavenly,[b]" to have His "Glory revealed in us,[c]" "to live with Him, to reign with Him,[d]" "share His Resurrection,[e]" be raised with Him and in Him, in Him be glorified, with Him to "reign for ever and ever,[f]" "reign in life,[g]" "sit on His Throne, as He is set upon His Father's Throne.[h]" But exceeding great and past all thought as this must be, the beginning of it must have

[x] Baptismal Service.
[y] S. Mark ix. 48.
[z] Rom. vi. 11.
[a] 1 Cor. iii. 17.
[b] Ib. xv. 49.
[c] Rom. viii. 18.
[d] 2 Tim. ii. 11, 12.
[e] Rom. vi. 5.
[f] Rev. xxii. 5.
[g] Rom. v. 17.
[h] Rev. iii. 21.

taken place here. They only shall bear that Blissful Image there, in whom it has, in its degree, been retraced here. In them only shall that Life be "*revealed*," in whom it has been "hid" here, whose "life has been hid with Christ in God.[i]" In them only shall He there be "glorified," who here, amid whatever weakness and imperfection, have, by gazing on Him their Risen Lord, been "changed from glory to Glory, by the Lord the Spirit.[k]"

Seek we, then, to rise again in the Spirit, in faith, in hope, in charity,[l] that we may hereafter rise, through It, in the body also. Cherish we all Its godly Motions, attend to Its Guidance, listen to Its secret Whisperings; seek to walk in the Spirit; see that, neither in thought, word, or work, we offend Him; but speak, act, or think as they, who are not merely flesh and blood, but are the temples of God. As, in His Holy Presence here, we should not speak, or think, or act the words or works of vanity, so be we watchful over ourselves ever, as bearing Him about every where, being ourselves, every where, His Temple. Set we that Blessed Image before us, to be copied in us, not by our own strength or skill, but by His Spirit, Which He will give to them that ask Him. Seek we to live less to the world and like the world, and more like Him Who hath overcome the world; be we not of the world when we must be *in* the world; seek we to have less of the world or the world's goods, rather than more; seek we more to share His Lot of Poverty by foregoing what we have to benefit His poor; His Obedience, by setting God alway before us and in all things; His Humility, by putting others forward, and longing to be last ourselves; His Gentleness, by bearing undeserved reproaches or revilings meekly; His Self-sacrificing Love, by giving, as we may, our time, or money, or thoughts, or care, our watchings or weariness and painfulness, for the good of others. Count we nothing hard, or irksome, or loathsome, which may minister to Him in His members; nothing sweet or pleasant out of Him. Count we honour (if we must have it) a burthen to be borne, dishonour the more wel-

[i] Col. iii. 3. [k] 1 Cor. iii. 8. [l] See S. Aug. in Ps. 70, Serm. ii. § 10

come, as more fitted to us; count we riches, spent on self, poverty; poverty, for His Sake, the true riches; loss, gain, and gain, loss. Seek we Him in His Sacraments, by receiving that Life-giving Bread which is His Flesh, for the Life of the world; in His House, by penitent, lowly worship; in His poor, by ministering to them; in His sick, by visiting them; in His little ones, by receiving them in His Name, and fencing them in His Fold, and teaching them to love Him. Seek we Him in our thoughts, words, and actions. So in all things seeking Him, shall we, at length, find Him, and ourselves be found in Him; yea, He, Who shall manifest Himself more fully then, shall, according to His most true Promise, in earnest thereof, while hidden from the world, manifest Himself to them who are also hidden from the world in Him. He shall impart to us more of our True Life, even Himself. He will make these poor bodies less a hindrance to us, kindle that Love within us which shall burn away the vain desires of the flesh, wing our souls that we may arise aloft to Him, and cleave to Him in sorrow or in joy, in strength or in weakness, in dryness or refreshment; so, when He cometh, we, who have been, in Him, raised by His Spirit above the things of this world, and, even amid our manifold falls and stumbling, have yet looked unto Him with steadfast eye and earnest heart, shall be caught up to meet Him there, and so shall we be for ever with the Lord, joying in His Presence, and satisfied with His Likeness, and filled for ever with His Fulness, the Fulness of God.

SERMON XVII.

OUR RISEN LORD'S LOVE FOR PENITENTS.

EASTER.

ST. MARK XVI. 9.

"*Now when Jesus was risen early the first day of the week, He appeared first to Mary Magdalene, out of whom He had cast seven devils.*"

IS EASTER-TIDE then, too, a Festival for penitents? Well might the strictness and humiliation of Lent, and the solemn season of the Passion belong to them, for precious to the penitent is The Redeemer. But this season also, in which the Church can scarce express her joy, and her Hymns burst forth in Halleluias, and signs of humiliation were of old put away, can such, on this side the grave, be the portion of penitents? Those who did homage at His Spotless Birth were watchers by midnight, men of a simple, guileless life, or Kings who had left their glory and their home, to offer of their best to One Whom His own received not. When Christ was presented in the temple, holy hoar age took him up in his arms, and pious widowhood spake of Him, for Whom during nearly a century of watching and prayer, it had looked. Holy innocents were the first martyrs to Him; babes and sucklings, unspotted by actual sin, cried Hosanna to Him. No traces of penitents were there,

except as far as the whole race of His redeemed are that one wounded man, whose bruises He, the Good Samaritan, hath healed by His Own. "All we, like sheep, had gone astray,[a]" all, if they are gathered unto Him, must have returned to Him, the Shepherd and Bishop of their souls, from Whom, by nature, all had turned away. The ox knew "his Owner, and the ass his Master's crib;[b]" but His Holy Childhood drew not those who had, by this world's headstrong pleasure or deadening cares, dried up in themselves the child-like spirit. A mightier Call was needed to awaken those dead and buried in trespasses and sins. With pierced Hands was the sheep to be brought back which had wandered far away; the thorns and briers of its sins, whereby it was held, were first to pierce and to crown its Redeemer's Brow. With suffering, toil, weariness, homelessness, contradictions of sinners, entangling in His Words, blasphemies, hunger, thirst, watchings in prayer, temptations in fasting, tears of compassion, was the Cup of Salvation to be mingled which His Father gave Him to drink for us, that it might overflow in love to us, and in us sinners. By these forerunners of the Cross were hearts of penitents to be won; in them was Its force to be put forth; through these was Its virtue to issue from Him to heal sinners.

No marvel, then, that a penitent was by the Cross of Christ; yet it is marvellous in what company. His Blessed Mother, the Disciple He loved, and one, once like what He became for us, "the very scorn of men and the outcast of the people![c]" So would He teach us that He died for all, redeemed all; the Mother of Whom He took His Own Holy Flesh, as much as ourselves, with His Own Blood He redeemed and hallowed; the Disciple whom He Loved, He loved first,[d] that he might love Him. Thus far He makes no difference. He redeemed them equally with her who seemed among the last of His redeemed. And her whom He had redeemed and restored, He placed, the last, among the first, the once impure with the pure and holy, that none should glory, none judge, none despair.

[a] Is. liii. 6. [b] Is. i. 3. [c] Ps. xxii. 6. [d] 1 St. John iv. 19.

Great was this token of His Love for sinners. Her gaze, which once wandered after vanities, He fixed on Himself; unbound her arms from the grasp of sinful pleasures, and wound them round His Cross: deadened her senses to man's praise, which they had once drunk in, or to the scoffs of blasphemers around, and quickened them to see in Him her Redeemer Alone; held her near to Himself, not like the robber on an unwilling cross, but by "bands of Love." Great was the Love Which thus severed her from all to whom she had been like, and joined her to them to whom she was unlike. What so unlike, as His Own Virgin Mother, and an adulteress? she upon Whom "the Holy Ghost came," and "the Power of The Highest overshadowed," "with" whom "the Lord" was, and she in whom "seven devils"[e] dwelt;—an universe, as it were, of sin, seven spirits of evil, opposed to the Seven-fold Gifts of the Good Spirit of God; the Temple of God, through whom God "tabernacled" among men, and the temple of Belial; she who was "highly favoured," and she who was "rottenness in the bones;[f]" she, "blessed among women," and she who was of those of whom Scripture says, "The woman shall be a curse among her people;[g]" she, of whom He was born Who should now "save His people from their sins,[h]" and she "whose house inclineth unto death, and her paths unto the dead?[i]" Yet these stood together by the Cross of Jesus, united by It; both through It alone pure; both in It accepted; both through It to be glorified; both through It for ever to behold His Face, the Son and the Redeemer, and both, as they each could contain, to be for ever filled with the Love of Him, their Creator.

Such was the acceptance of penitence by the Cross; but, if possible, more marvellous yet at the Resurrection. At the Cross, the outcast and penitent was equalled to the holy and the pure; at the Resurrection, even preferred. Holy Scripture tells us not, how or when The Redeemer healed her sorrows, "whose very soul the sword had pierced[k]" at His Crucifixion; it does say of the penitent, to her Jesus ap-

[e] S. Mark xvi. 9.; S. Luke viii. 2.
[f] Prov. xiv. 30.
[g] Num. v 28.
[h] S. Matt. i. 21.
[i] Prov. ii. 18.
[k] S. Luke i. 35.

peared *first*. He Who had passed by all the Angel-hosts, and "took not their nature" but ours, the last of His fallen creatures, passed by her (so Scripture says) through whom He took that nature, to comfort her who had most degraded it. "He appeared first unto Mary Magdalene, out of whom He had cast seven devils." "He was seen of Cephas, then of all the Apostles;[l]" seen first of all the Apostles, by him, who having denied Him, had "wept bitterly." Yet even before him who was first in confession of faith in Him, and now grieving over his fall; before John who loved Him and whom above all He loved; before Andrew who brought his brother to Him; or Nathanael, to whom He of Whom[m] it is said, "neither was guile found in His Mouth," bare witness that he was conformed unto Himself, "In him is no guile;[n]" or Thomas, who said, "Let[o] us also go with Him that we may die with Him;" or Philip, to whom He revealed, "I am in the Father, and the Father in Me;[p]" or James, the chosen witness of His Miracles, of the Glories of His Transfiguration and His Agony,—before all the eleven who had "been with Him in His Temptations,[q]" and who were to sit on His Throne of Glory; He sheweth Himself to a penitent. Not zeal, nor hearts of fire, nor a guileless spirit, nor burning faith, nor devotion unto death, nor love which lay on His Bosom, nor on whose Bosom He Who "upholdeth all things by the Word of His Power," had vouchsafed in Infancy to be borne, not Apostolic love, or a Mother's tears, win from Him His First Look, but the tears of a penitent. His Mother doubtless He comforted by His Spirit; the penitent He comforts by His Very Presence, and His Words. Oh mighty power of penitence, which before Apostles, joined the robber, but lately a blasphemer, to The Redeemer's Side in Paradise, cleansed from the blood of man by the Blood of God, the first-fruits of the Redemption to fill up Angelic Hosts! Oh wondrous condescension of Redeeming Love, Who rose early in the Morning, to seek her who, late though she had loved

[l] 1 Cor. xv. 5. [m] 1 S. Peter ii. 22. [n] S. John i. 47.
[o] S. John xi. 16. [p] Ib. xiv. 10. [q] S. Luke xxii. 28.

Him, then "sought Him early," and, as an earnest of His Yearning Tenderness for penitents, first revealed His Risen Glories to a penitent, made her an apostle to Apostles, a comforter to His brethren, first by her mouth announced to them the condescending title "My brethren," yea, communicated to them, as far as could be, His Own Sonship, "go to My brethren, and say unto them, I ascend unto My Father,[r]" by Nature and Eternal Birth, "and your Father," by your adoption in Myself, "to My God" in My Human Nature, "and your God," as being by Me reconciled to Him!

But the Mercy of the Resurrection is even fuller than the Mercy at the Cross, which it completed. The Mercy at the Cross was Acceptance; the Mercy at the Resurrection was not Acceptance only, but enlarged Grace, Heavenly Visitations, to be known by name to Jesus, called as His own, spoken to in the heart, to have One God with the Man Christ Jesus, One Father with the Co-Eternal Son. Great indeed, and blessed are the Words, "To-day shalt thou be with Me in Paradise.[s]" Blessed are those ears which hear them, although they wait all life through, with that one prayer, "Lord, remember me in Thy Kingdom." Blessed they, whom in the hour of death Jesus calls, and places near Himself. But the Cross is Death in Christ, the Resurrection is Life in Him, the beginning of Endless Life. The Cross is Salvation; the Resurrection, Glory. "He died for our sins; He rose again for our Justification." He died, to destroy death for us and in us; He rose again to restore to us Everlasting Life. He died to save us from Hell; He lives to give us back to Heaven. He died that we, in Him, might be dead to sin; He lived, yea liveth, that we in Him might live unto holiness and to Him. At the Cross, Jesus promised that the penitent should be with Him; in the Resurrection Himself cometh, Victorious over Hell and Death, and Satan; His Body Spiritual, Glorious, Incapable of Suffering, (an Earnest of the Gifts He will bestow on these poor bodies), to be with the penitent. Great indeed

[r] S. John xx. 17.

[s] S. Luke xxiii. 43.

(the penitent must often think) is the hope, "Can such as I be saved? Are then all my waste of the Grace of God, my rebellions, wilfulness, defilement, abuse of my senses, will, powers, my preference of Satan to God, Barabbas to Jesus, my betrayal of my Lord, denials of Him, not once but oftentimes, delivering Him to be crucified, crucifying Him myself, yea, (God have mercy!) 'trampling Him under foot,'[t]—are, can all this be forgiven?" And yet, such is the Boundless Love of God, such the Power of the Prayer of Christ for His murderers, such the Unutterable Groanings of the Spirit Who is Love, the soul which loves has yet a bolder wish. It would not be forgiven only; it would be restored. And of this, our dear Lord's Visit to the penitent is the earnest.

Often has the penitent soul need of all the consolation it can have. Sore is it to look back on years wasted in vanities and worse, to think what the soul might have been, what might it not be now, had it obeyed each Call it has neglected! How might it have had "Grace for grace![u]" How might each obeyed call have been a step in that glorious ladder at whose summit is God! How does God pour into the soul Love for love, cleanse its obedience, gather it more into Himself, knit it more wholly to Him, lift it up more and more to Heavenly desires, bear it to Himself, on eagle's wings, to behold Him the Sun of Righteousness, and be transfigured with His Glory, and conformed to His Image, and made, (Holy Scripture says) one spirit with Himself. To *be* what it is, is not to the awakened soul so sore, as to have made or unmade itself what it is. Had God made it the very least, and last, and dullest in soul, of all, whom He at last redeems, had such been the Will of God, it had been well. It were unutterable, undeserved, bliss, to be the very last in the Kingdom of Heaven, were such the Will of God for it, had He so created it. But to feel that God did give the soul higher aims, to feel in itself powers to love, feel, glow, be kindled, burn, with thoughts of good, and charity, and zealous service; to have yearned all life long

[t] Heb. vi. 6. [u] S. John i. 16.

for some unknown end, and too late to have found that it has been seeking out of God, what God willed to give it in Himself: this is the very "bitterness of death." And then the soul cries out, "Is this clean gone for ever?" Can I never be what I might have been? "Hath[x] God forgotten to be Gracious, or hath He shut up His Tender Mercies in displeasure?" It is not its own loss it mourns over, but that it has lost God. It covets no high places, would be gladly last of all, if it might even be the last; but cannot it again have the Love of God, Which it might have had, had it ever loved? Must it, throughout Eternity, love God less, and have less of the Love of God within it? It cares not for the dignity of the Seraphim, but it would have the Seraph's glowing love. It would be any where where God would place it, so it might have all the Love of God, for which God created it in His Image, redeemed it by His Blood, and placed His Spirit within it.

Such thoughts have most true penitents had. If it were possible, they would say, any chastisement but that! To lose all earthly joy, it is God's Will; it is a dream, not the substance; it is not God! To have all sufferings, or shame; so God support us, it is the lot of Jesus. All besides belongs to God's creatures only; it is of time alone; to love God is Himself, (for God is Love) and for eternity. "Give me," it would say, "what Thou willest; only deny me not Thyself; let me not possess Thee less, love Thee less, than, if faithful, I should have loved Thee; be it that here I must be a wreck of myself; but bind me up, re-make me, that I contain not forever less of Thee and of Thy Love."

Such deep throes as these our Tender Lord seems to meet, in this His First Visit after The Resurrection to a penitent. Deep must have been the consolation of Magdalene to have found Him Whom she had lost, Whom she sought, Whom she wept and sought again, and sought by weeping, and wept because she could not find. She teaches us how to find Him, if we have ever lost Him. Deep must have been her bliss, to find, not as she hoped, His lifeless Body,

[x] Ps. lxxvii. 9.

but, above what she hoped, her Living Lord, and be by Him again beloved. Doubtless she had no thoughts of self. One thought filled her soul, "her Lord." At His Feet, where she was pardoned, she would cast herself: to His disciples she would impart her joy, "she[y] had seen The Lord, and He had spoken these things unto her." But in her, what deeper comforts yet to the penitent! To find Jesus, or rather to be found of Jesus, is indeed All. For He is "our God and our All." But to be, in a manner, the first object of Jesus' Care; for a soul which feels itself a very outcast, "no more worthy" to be a son, having squandered its portion of goods, to be visited by Jesus, to be made the herald of Jesus, to tell to others far above it, the Life, and Glories, and Love of Jesus, what may not be in store for penitents, to whom He showeth such Love as this?

The visits of Jesus after the Resurrection are tokens of the ways, in which He visiteth souls now. He came as a Spirit. Closed doors were no hindrance to His Spiritual Body. His disciples said "It is a Spirit." Not *only* a Spirit, our Blessed Lord taught them, "for a Spirit hath not Flesh and Bones, as ye see Me have." His Sacred Humanity and Its Life-giving Scars remain; yet He cometh and goeth as a Spirit. Where, during those mysterious forty days, He was, we know not; He ate, in proof that He still retained our human nature in His Divine, but He needed it not; He was present, not in weakness any longer, but in power, girt around with "all Power in Heaven and in earth;" none could know Him, save those to whom He revealed Himself; His words kindled the heart; His wonted Tones, by which He called His own, disclosed Him: He made Himself known by Sacraments, to the two at Emmaus; by His Voice, "Mary!" to the Magdalene; by His Wounded Hands and Side, to the Apostles; and again, by His wonted Deeds of Power, to the seven at the sea of Tiberias. And so He would teach us how He would visit His own, unto the end; gathered together in His Name, shewing love, as we think, to a stranger and in Him receiving

[y] S. John xx. 18.

Christ, in the lawful works of our calling, and in the penitent seeking for Him.

And, of these, first and chiefest is penitent love, or loving penitence. Our dear Lord knew the needs we had, and the many discouragements which would assail us in turning to Him. A rebellious will, a slothful spirit, a sluggish body, passions strong and accustomed to the mastery, a purpose weak and accustomed to defeat, sin's iron bands, the senses quickened to sin, the affections deadened and chilled to God, understanding of duty dulled, a mind unawake to spiritual delights, a flesh clamorous for its wonted self-indulgence, a temper unsubdued and ever breaking out, self unmortified and placing itself in the stead of God,—these are fearful foes. Yet one there is deadlier than all, and which gives all these their force, despair that it can ever be better with us. It is hard to own that a whole life has been spoiled by some wrong end, that all our gold is dross; our fancied treasure, tinsel; our devotion, indevotion; our charity, penury; our activity, self-seeking. Hard is it, in whatever way, to own that we have been toiling for a wrong reward; wasting ourselves and our inheritance, the Love of God, the Blood of our Lord, the Gifts of His Spirit. Hard is it, in any thing, to begin anew. And then despair would bribe us to remain as we are, that we do well enough, through hopelessness that we can undo what we have done, do what we have left undone.

Hopeless, indeed, it were, were our hope in ourselves! But was it then Mary herself who cast out the seven devils which dwelt in her? did she come undrawn to the Feet of Jesus, or did her Lord now for the first time call her by her name? He Himself, Who called her, strengthened her to come, made her forget all except Himself her Saviour, that she was a sinner, and He "The Friend of sinners." By His Compassion He inwardly called her to His Feet at the feast. By love for Him Who loved her, He drew her to the Cross, to behold the fruit of her forgiven sins, and the Price of their Forgiveness, and to weep not for Him, but for herself, whose griefs He bare. By longing He drew her to the tomb; Unseen, He held her there, she knew not why, save that it

had some trace of Him Who loved her; and where she last had seen Him, there she hoped to find Him. He drew her as a penitent, to humble herself at His Feet. He drew her to the Cross to behold and gaze on His Exceeding Love for penitents. He drew her on Easter Morn, that she might with Him arise, and in love thither continually ascend, whither He, Who for her had died, and risen, and revived, was about to ascend "to His Father and her Father, and His God and her God.[z]" And can we think that He Who so visited her in Person, first of all whom, on earth, He had made His own, did not, when withdrawn from earth, often visit her by His Spirit? Well might one such sight of Jesus fill the soul for ever; one Voice, "Mary!" dwell in her ears and deafen them to all but It! But He leaveth not the soul which fainteth for Him. His Calls are earnests of Calls to come, His Consolations of future Converse with the soul; and so it has been thought that her whole after-life was spent, one while in longing, loving, aspirations after Him, and then, again, in His secret Consolations of her spirit, by His Presence in her soul.

Thou needest not then sit down in weariness and hopelessness, whatever of earlier years thou hast lost, whatever Grace thou hast forfeited, though thou hast been in a far country, far away in affections from Him Who loved thee, and wasting on His creatures, nay sacrificing on idol altars with strange fire, the Gifts which God gave thee, that thou mightest be precious in His Own Sight. He, Who called Magdalene, in her calleth thee. He, Who by His Sweetness in her soul, drew her to cast away all this world's deadly sweetness, will speak to thine, if thou wilt hearken. Wert thou bound and a slave to all the deadly sins, thy state were not more hopeless than her's seemed, when seven devils held her bound, and indwelt her. He Who, as at this time, appeared to her, as she might bear to gaze upon Him, will appear unto thee. Be thy soul to thee as an empty tomb,

[z] On the identity of St. Mary Magdalene, the penitent who anointed our Lord's Feet, and the sister of Martha, see note at the end of the "Sermons preached at St. Saviour's," and the Rev. Is. Williams' Harmony of the Gospels; "The Passion."

where Christ's Lifeless Body once was buried by thy sins, and now is not; be it that thou see nothing but darkness, feel nothing but the chillness and damp of the tomb, catch no ray of light, look again and again, and discover no trace of Him; yea, worse still, though thou see there "the linen clothes," the tokens that He once was there, and now is gone from thee; and now all religion seems to thee but a lifeless form, a mere outside with no inward substance, "the napkin about His Head,[a]" but in thee "the Son of Man hath not where to lay His Head,[b]" though thou call and none seemeth to answer, thou ask where they have laid Him, that thou mayest again seek Him, and do Him what honour thou mayest, and none telleth thee, despair not. Only seek on, and thou shalt find. Mourn His absence, desire His Presence. The very desire *is* His Presence. Thou couldest not desire Him, but for His Presence in thy soul; thou couldest not mourn His absence, unless He taught thee to mourn, that thou mightest be hereafter comforted. He will appear unto thee by some comfort in prayer; some joy in a deed of self-denial to chasten thyself, or for His poor; some secret stillness of the soul, or ray of light though but for an instant; or by some thrill of joy on one steadfast purpose, henceforth to have no other Object but "to win Christ," to love all thou lovest in Him and for Him, to know nothing "save Jesus Christ, and Him Crucified.[c]"

Follow on, and He Who loved her so as to forgive her, and having forgiven her, Scripture says, He "loved" her,[d] and loving her shewed Himself unto her, hath He not promised the same to thee? "He that hath My Commandments and keepeth them, he it is that loveth Me: and he that loveth Me shall be loved of My Father, and I will love him, and will manifest Myself to him.[e]" "If a man love Me, he will keep My Words; and My Father will love him, and We will come unto him, and make Our Abode with him.[f]" And what Jesus hath again made the Dwelling-Place of the Trinity, how should it be wanting in any Grace? He Who

[a] S. John xx. 7. [b] S. Luke ix. 58. [c] 1 Cor. ii. 2
[d] S. John xi. 5. [e] Ib. xiv. 21. [f] Ib. xiv. 23.

cast out the seven devils will replace them by the Seven Chief Gifts of the Holy Spirit. For sloth He will give thee fervid, active love; for carnal appetite, hunger after Him, Who Alone satisfieth; for pride, His Lowliness; for envy, His Charity; for anger, His Meekness; for degrading pleasures, love of Him Alone; for covetousness, His Bountifulfulness, that so thou mayest gain Him, the True Riches.

Follow on, and where is the bound of the love wherewith thou mayest love Him Who loved thee, since thy love is His Love in thee? Bow thyself down in lowliness to His Tomb, seek nothing but Jesus, turn aside from all which would detain thee from Jesus; and He Who by His Inward Voice called Thee, by His Passion will fence thee, by His Blood will cleanse thee, by His Resurrection will appear to thee in Glory, and in Himself will glorify thee. He desireth to restore to thee thy lost Graces, more than thou canst long for them. He (to speak reverently) longeth that thou shouldest Love Him more than thou canst. For He knoweth what a Treasure His Love is unto thee; and what hath He not done for love of thee and to win thy love? Thy Graces are His Glory, the Travail of His Soul, the Fruits of His Sufferings. If thou deservest them not, who hast wasted them, He hath deserved them for thee, Who as Man "received Gifts for men, yea, even for the rebellious, that the Lord God might dwell in them.[g]" Only desire to empty thy soul of all which is not He; and He, as and when He seeth best for thee, will dwell in thee richly, and will give thee not thy lost Graces only, nor abundance of peace, nor riches of consolation; not only what "eye hath seen, or ear heard, or hath entered into the heart of man," nor aught which in the brightest moment of love thou ever imaginedst; not only what St. Paul heard in Paradise, in words which he could not utter, or Daniel or St. John saw, but were bidden to seal up, (for this hath "entered into the heart of man,") but what "eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither hath entered into the heart of man,[h]" The Infinite Love of God; yea, Himself Who is Love.

[g] Ps. lxviii. 18. [h] 1 Cor. ii. 9.

"Blessed is the man whom Thou choosest and receivest unto Thee: he shall dwell in Thy Courts, and shall be satisfied with the Pleasures of Thy House, even of Thy Holy Temple. O Lord God of Hosts, blessed is the man that putteth his trust in Thee! for Thou, Lord, hast never failed them that seek Thee.[i]"

[i] Ps. lxv. 4.; lxxxiv. 12.; ix. 10.

SERMON XVIII.

HOW TO DETAIN JESUS IN THE SOUL.

EASTER

St. Luke xxiv. 28, 29.

"*And He made as though He would have gone further. But they constrained Him, saying, Abide with us; for it is toward evening, and the day is far spent. And He went in to tarry with them.*"

The histories of Holy Scripture are pictures of ourselves, what we are, or ought to be, or ought not to be; what we should do, what avoid. By them God often reveals to us our inmost selves. He shews us in His Saints what, by His Grace, we might have become; and more often, alas! in those who have come short of that Grace, what we have been, or are, or are in danger of being. We see there marked with God's Hand, either in God's earlier people, or in individuals whom He has rejected, something awefully like ourselves. It shews us that there often seems much to admire in some, whom God saith, He hateth. Who, until taught otherwise, would not admire what seems open-heartedness in Esau, whom Holy Scripture calls "a profane person;" or would not follow Balaam with feelings almost of respect, until that last deed of tempting Israel to sin; or

admire Saul's early nobleness, and Jehu's zeal for the Lord; and pity even Judas' entire self-hating repentance? So would God warn us not to trust in any natural grace which He has given us, or to allow the slightest evil consciously to lurk in us! So would He warn us of the narrowness of the way of Life!

But now, at this joyous season, He calleth us with gladlier histories, and tells us how He appeared when "God[a] shewed Him openly, not to all the people, but unto witnesses chosen before of God." During these Holy forty days, in which "He[b] shewed Himself alive after His Passion, by many infallible proofs, speaking of the things pertaining to the Kingdom of God," Holy Scripture leads us apart from the world into His secret Presence. It tells us not what the world did, except the one lie of the Chief Priests, whereby they hoped to hinder the Power of God; but carries us away to be alone with those who were alone with Jesus. They to whom Jesus then shewed Himself were the first-fruits of the Elect, the corn sifted from the chaff, which was mostly to bring forth much fruit by dying with its Lord—holy souls, which lived but for their Lord in a sacred solitude, hanging upon Him, even when Unseen, awaiting to hear His Will, tarrying for His fuller Presence and "the[c] Promise of The Father," speaking of Him, thinking of Him, visited, enlightened, kindled by Him. He was the Centre of their being. For Him Alone, as by Him Alone, they lived. The world rejected them, as it had Him; it cast them out, and was ready to persecute them; they were "shut up for fear of the Jews." But the lion which roared without, "seeking whom he might devour," could not enter that sacred fold. There was a solemn, still pause; rest on earth; Satan awaiting how his kingdom should be overthrown; our Blessed Lord not as yet taking His Throne of Glory, but by His brief, unearthly Visits, preparing His Disciples for the loss of His Bodily Presence; enlightening, strengthening, arming them to overcome the world as He had overcome it. It was one brief, hushed period, wherein the Apostles were

[a] Acts x. 40, 41. [b] Ib. i. 3. [c] Ib. i. 4.

to be clad in their Armour of Light, for that long struggle with the powers of darkness which was to be carried on unto the end.

These Visits of our Lord, then, had (as I said last Sunday[d]) something of the character of His Visits to the soul by His Spirit since. They are pictures to us, how and for what those Visits are vouchsafed, to what sort of persons, how they are to be received.

And this, to the disciples of Emmaus, represents how Christ shows Himself to those who commune of Him, who have Him in their hearts, who muse mournfully that they have no more sense of His Presence, that He has wrought no greater deliverance for the Church or for them in it.

They believe in Him, yet know not fully Whom they believe; their heart believes, but their understanding doubts; their hope is not extinct, but smouldering. In that they say "we trusted that it had been He Who should have redeemed Israel," they shew that their trust was not effaced, but that it was clouded; they trust still, yet the time of fulfilment, the third day, is come; and since the promise is not fulfilled, they, like Saul when waiting for Samuel, were tempted to disbelieve, yet they *were* perplexed only. And so, since they felt after Him Who is the Truth, the Truth found them. "As they communed together and reasoned, Jesus Himself drew near and went with them." To meditate on Jesus, brings Him down to the soul, even if as yet we know not that it is He. The disciples have an awe of His Sacred Presence; they speak to Him as a stranger, yet they speak to Him, in love, of Himself; they listen in reverent stillness to His earnest Rebuke, "O fools and slow of heart to believe all that the prophets have spoken;" their "hearts burned within them while He talked with them by the way, and while He opened to them the Scriptures."

Even now they had no clear knowledge Who He was. Yet the Holy Stranger had kindled a coal in their hearts. It was otherwise with them than when He had joined them; and now a choice was to be made. Either the Stranger

[d] p. 262.

must be brought nearer to them, to their home, under their roof, or they must part with Him. Would they ever have seen Him again, had they so parted? "Jesus made as though He would have gone further." This was, of course, true, which He did. He would have gone, had they not constrained Him. "Abide with us; for it is toward evening and the day is far spent." He willed to abide with them, but only if they prayed Him. They prayed Him to abide, out of love for Him, rather than for themselves; and shewing in act their love to a stranger, they received, not "Angels," but the Lord of Angels, "unawares.[e]" Ye know the rest, brethren; how, in the breaking of bread, or the Holy Eucharist, "He opened their eyes, and they knew Him;" "He vanished out of their sight," but they believed on Him. Before they had seen Him and not known Him. Now, for a time, they see Him no more, but they believe in Whom they see not, they joy in Whom they behold not; they love Him Who is out of their sight, and, believing, they "rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory." They go to spread their joy to their brethren, and they meet with the glad tidings that by one of them also He had been seen, "The Lord is risen indeed, and hath appeared to Simon." Most joyous meeting of souls to whom Christ had appeared apart, and who now were met to tell of His Loving-kindness!

Such is the history; and manifold is its teaching. I will mention some parts of it.

First. Doubts as to the use of holy things we do, or of God's Gifts to us, or even of the Faith, and of the reality of every thing unseen, are parts of Satan's assaults against us. He does not assail all so, but those whom he thinks he can hurt or torment in this way, and whom God permits so to be tried; as our Blessed Lord said to St. Peter, "Simon, Satan hath desired to have thee, to sift thee as wheat; but I have prayed for thee that thy faith fail not." Thus, because of two children, one baptized and the other unbaptized, we may see in the one, little or no fruits of Grace; and the na-

[e] Heb. xiii. 2.

tural temper of the unbaptized seems sweeter than that of the baptized, people are tempted to deny the Grace of Baptism altogether. And so, also, as to the other Sacrament, the poor are not uncommonly tempted to think that God has no Grace for them in It, because they see that others, careless persons, gain none. Or the careless lives of some Churchmen makes them doubt whether it be a blessing to belong to the Church or no. Or, nearer still, in themselves, if at first they feel no fruit from fasting, or even that their tempers are tried by it, they are tempted to give it up. Others have so given up public or even private prayer, first falling into careless ways about it, or using some reserve in their prayers, and not honestly giving their whole hearts to God, and then, because God does not thus answer their prayers, or give them any fervour, they shorten prayer, or make it a weary service, or even abandon it. Others have been tempted to look on all Faith as a dream, or deny what God has said to be true. In such cases, people, because they do not see the Promises of God fulfilled, doubt whether they can or will be fulfilled to them. They cannot but see that God *does* promise, in His Word, that He will hear prayer, bless fasting, enrich those who give alms; that by Baptism we are clothed with Christ, in the Holy Eucharist are made one with Him, that the Church is the appointed channel of His Gifts and of Salvation. But men come short of God's Gracious Will for them; and so they are tempted to doubt of His Promises altogether. Just so the disciples of Emmaus. They had believed that Jesus was "He Who should redeem Israel." But He redeemed it not in the way they looked for. He had foretold that He should arise from the dead on the third day; "to-day," they say, "is the third day since these things were done;" and He had not appeared. Had they, upon this, gone away, He never would have appeared unto *them*. They were saddened, perplexed, yet still they mused on Jesus and His Promises. And so, as and when they looked not, relief came. "Jesus drew near and went with them," while they knew not, hoped not, that it was He. And so in the like

cases now, doubts will have no real hold upon us while we hold fast to Jesus. Let us commune with Him and of Him, dwell on His Holy Words; in due time we shall either see the Truth, or, which is as blessed, see that what we see not is part of the Unsearchable Wisdom of God; and believing what He has said, we shall have far more than sight, or sense, or knowledge of our own; for we shall have the knowledge of God. And, as it was with these disciples, so Jesus now, when we meditate on His Words, often joins Himself to us, talks with us by the way, expounds to us the Scriptures, and makes our hearts burn within us. Disputing often leads further from His Truth. If we repeat to Him His Own Words, meditate on them before Him, say to Him, "O Lord, Thou God of Truth, I believe all Thou speakest to be the Truth," His Spirit Who spake them opens the eyes of our souls, and without voice or sound of words bears witness to our souls of His Truth.

II. Then, while thus communing with Jesus, take we heed that we act as He teacheth. Our deeds are the fruits of our faith, but they fix it and secure it in our souls. Without deeds, love grows chilled, and, with it, faith. We have no direct power over our faith. It is the Gift of God. We cannot make ourselves believe, or make our belief more lively than it is. If we endeavour to work upon it, we mostly impair it, or substitute some counterfeit for it. If we will do God's Will, He will uphold, strengthen, guard, revive it. Good deeds are the life of faith; for they retain the Presence of Christ in the soul, Who is the soul's Life. "With the heart man believeth unto Righteousness.[f]" Nothing shall hurt thy faith, while thy heart is whole with God; nothing shall warp thy heart while, for love of Christ, thou dost deeds of love. When the Disciples listened to Jesus, their hearts burned within them: when, although unknown, they shewed love to Him, and "constrained Him to tarry with them," He made Himself known unto them. Christ is with us now, every where, in His poor, sick, naked, hungry, thirsty. Have mercy on them, as thou canst,

[f] Rom. x. 10.

wherein they need, and He Who Alone giveth thee what He withholds from them, that thou, for His Sake, mayest supply them, will have Mercy on thee.

III. There is yet another and larger teaching of this history, which extends over the whole of life, relates to every Communion; to every fervent prayer which any, by God's Grace, prays; every melting of the hard heart, every drawing of the soul to serve God better. It belongs to every Outpouring of His Grace, and is of especial moment in Holy Seasons such as this. It is, the great need of active diligence, not to part with Jesus, when He has once been near us, and visited our souls. On this depends growth in Grace, the Good Pleasure of God, the Love of Christ, Holiness, Everlasting Bliss, Salvation. "Jesus made as though He would have gone further. But they constrained Him, saying, Abide with us, for it is toward evening." So is it with the soul. Jesus visits it many ways. Every Visitation of God, in Awe and Mercy, is a Visit of Jesus to the soul. It feels His Presence. It is troubled, and turns to Him; is alarmed at itself, or with fears of Hell, and flees to Him; or He brings before it its own crooked ways and the loathsomeness of its sin, and it would fain escape out of itself to Him; or He gives it thoughts of His Own Everlasting Love, and the bliss of ever loving, ever being beloved; and kindles some longing for Him. Every thing which deadens the soul to the world, or quickens it to Heavenly things, is a Visit of Jesus. Fast or feast; Lent or Easter; inward joy, or outward sorrow; the hunger of the soul, or His Satisfying it; the restlessness of the soul until it has found God; or the deep, tranquil calm, when His Light dawns on the soul, and it sees and feels that it was made for One Alone, that One Alone can fill it, One Love displaces all besides, One Object of its Faith, Hope, Joy, Praise, its labour or its rest, its speech or its silence, stands revealed before it; the unformed yearning of the young soul to be wholly God's; or the aching of the heart of elders, that it has ever loved things out of Him; the bright glow of childhood, which says with

young Samuel, "Speak, Lord, for Thy servant heareth;" or penitence stricken with Saul to the earth, and crying from the dust, "Lord, what wouldest Thou have me to do?" —every thought of God, every desire to love Him; every hope, fear, misgiving, imagining; every crushing of the heart's bright earthly joys; every gleam of that Unsetting Sun which shineth on it from Heaven; the hiding of His Face, or the Sunshine of His Presence; all are, in different forms, Visits of Jesus. Yet in all, we have need to say, "Abide with us, Lord!"

For all the hosts of the damned have had Calls, by Providence, or by nature, or by Grace; and who knows how many, for a time, rejoiced in them, or, for a time, obeyed them? At the time of the flood all flesh had corrupted his way upon the earth; and "every imagination of the thoughts of man's heart was only evil continually;" yet among them were those once called "sons of God," who, when the seed of Cain grew worse and worse, began, in public worship, "to call upon the Name of the Lord.[g]" All Israel who left their bones in the wilderness had, not once only, "feared[h] the Lord, and believed the Lord, and His servant Moses." It is the very character given of them by God, "When[i] He slew them, they sought Him; and turned them early, and enquired after God." He sums up in the same way their dreary history under the Judges, "When the Lord raised them up Judges, then the Lord was with the Judge, and delivered them out of the hand of their enemies all the days of the Judge; and it came to pass, when the Judge was dead, that they returned and corrupted themselves, more than their fathers.[k]" "It had been better had they never known" God. But God saith of them that they "forgat Him." They *had*, then, known Him once. "They[l] forgat God their Saviour, Who had done so great things in Egypt." "She[m] went after her lovers," her idols, all which promised her contentment in this life out of God, "and forgat Me, saith the Lord." This was the very

[g] Gen. iv. 46. [h] Ex. xiv. 31. [i] Ps. lxxviii. 34.
[k] Jud. ii. 18. 19. [l] Ps. cvi. 21. [m] Hos. ii. 13.

hopelessness of their case. God speaketh to them, as though all the resources of His Almighty Love and Wisdom were come to an end. "O Ephraim, what shall I do unto thee? O Judah, what shall I do unto thee? for your goodness is as a morning cloud, and as the early dew, which goeth away.[n]" When a burning heat cometh after the morning dew, we know there is no hope of refreshment, until night cometh. If the seed come not up, or the tree blossom not, we have yet hope when more kindly skies come. We wait for it. But when it has shot forth, and the snail or the mildew have consumed it, or the frost nipped the blossom, what further hope is there? Even so Scripture saith, "If after they have escaped the pollutions of the world, through the knowledge of the Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, they are again entangled therein, and overcome, the latter end is worse with them than the beginning. For it had been better for them not to have known the way of Righteousness, than, after they have known it, to turn from the holy Commandment delivered unto them.[o]"

To have had Calls, is a token that God has cared for thy soul; to have had them and neglected them, were, in itself, a forerunner of final hardness of heart and of damnation, but that God's Goodness overwhelmeth our evil; to have them now and to use them, is the only token of Salvation.

Again, of individuals, Saul perished without one thought of God, dreading only shame from man, a self-murderer. Yet this was he "upon whom the Spirit of God had come and given him another heart, and he was turned into another man, and God was with him.[p]" He took not patiently the chastisement of God, Who, on his disobedience, gave his kingdom to his neighbour, and "the Spirit of the Lord departed from him, and an evil spirit from the Lord troubled him.[q]" How does Balaam, again and again, seem to cling to God, or, still more, to be holden back by God! What fairer words could there be than "Get you into your land, for the Lord refuseth to let me go with you.[r]" "If

[n] Hos. vi. 4.
[o] 2 Pet. ii. 20, 21.
[p] 1 Sam. x. 6.—9.; xi. 6.
[q] 1 Sam. xvi. 14.
[r] Num. xxii. 13, 18, 19, 38.; xxiii. 10.

Balak would give me his house full of silver and gold, I cannot go beyond the Word of the Lord my God, to do less or more;" "tarry ye also here this night, that I may know what the Lord will say unto me more." "Lo, I am come unto thee: have I now any power at all to say any thing? The Word that God putteth in my mouth, that shall I speak." "Let me die the death of the righteous, and let my last end be like his." Nor were they words only, but acts. "When Balaam saw that it pleased the Lord to bless Israel, he went not, as at other times, to seek for enchantments;[s]" and he "saw the Vision of the Almighty," yea, he "beheld our Lord," "but not nigh;" he saw the "Star arise out of Jacob and the Sceptre out of Israel;" yet himself perished shortly in rebellion[t] against God, Whom, in words and deeds, yet not in his very inmost heart, he had owned. How did the disobedient prophet withstand every temptation but that wherein Satan was as an Angel of light! God was with him, but he did not abide with God, nor God with him. How blessed Solomon's youth, when, Holy Scripture saith, "the Lord loved him,[u]" and gave him "a wise and an understanding heart," and "he loved the Lord." How miserable his age, when he loved many strange women, and they turned away his heart, "and the Lord was angry with him because his heart was turned from the Lord God of Israel, which had appeared unto him twice, and had commanded him concerning this thing.[x]" How glorious the beginning of Gideon, when the Angel of the Lord appeared unto him, and said unto him, "The Lord is with thee, thou mighty man of valour,[y]" and cast down the altar of Baal, and when he cried "the sword of the Lord, and of Gideon." How sore the close when, of the prey, he "made an ephod, and all Israel went thither a whoring after it, and it became a snare unto Gideon and his house.[z]" Asa "did that which was

[s] Num. xxiv. 1, 4, 16, 17.
[t] Ib. xxxi. 8, 16.; 2 S. Peter ii. 15.; S. Jude 11.; Rev. ii. 14.
[u] 2 Sam. xii. 24, 25.; 1 Kings iii. 3, 12.
[x] 1 Kings xi. 1.—10.
[y] Jud. vi. 12, 25.—27.; vii. 18, 20.
[z] Jud. viii. 27.

good and right in the Eyes of the Lord his God, and his heart was perfect all his days," yet, in the disease whereof he died,[a] "he sought not to the Lord, but to the physicians." Jehoash "did[b] right in the sight of the Lord all his days wherein Jehoiada the priest instructed him;" after above thirty years of service, "he remembered not the kindness which Jehoiada, the father of Zechariah, had done to him, but slew his son[c]" "between the temple and the altar."

Even bad men have hearkened to the Voice of God for a while, in the midst of their sins. Ahab "humbled[d] himself" more than many Christians will, and obtained for himself the delay of punishment in this world. "Herod[e] feared John, knowing that he was a just man and an holy, and observed him, and when he heard him, he did many things and heard him gladly," though he beheaded him. "He heard him gladly," "was exceeding sorry" for his oath, yet passion had the mastery, and he did what he grieved for. He, in a manner, believed our Lord's miracles to be true, wished to see them wrought, was "exceeding glad to see Him;" yet wherein did it all end! "Herod, with his men of war, set Him at nought and mocked Him." Even Simon Magus believed for a time, "beholding[f] the miracles and signs which were done," although he was, at last, struck dead[g] when withdrawing men from the faith. And when our Lord foretells how His Word would be received by those who heard it, He tells us of one sort only, "who,[h] in an honest and good heart, keep it, and bring forth fruit with patience," that is, enduring to the end; the other three hear it (and one "with joy"), but in the end lose it.

And is this not what we see day by day, and know or have known in ourselves? How many praise sermons, how few act on them! Not to such as we are, but to a Prophet, God saith,[i] "Thou art unto them as a very lovely song, of one that hath a pleasant voice, and can play well upon an

[a] 2 Chron. xiv. 2.; xv. 17.; xvi. 12.
[b] 2 Kings xii 2.
[c] 2 Chron. xxiv. 22.; S. Matt. xxiii. 35.
[d] 1 Kings xxi. 27.
[e] S. Mark vi. 20.—26.; S. Matt. xiv. 1, 2.; S. Luke xxiii 8.—11.
[f] Acts viii. 13.
[g] See S. Cyril Cat. vi. 15. p. 68, Oxf. Tr. Eus. H. E ii. 15.
[h] S. Luke viii. 15, 13.
[i] Ezek. xxxiii. 32.

instrument: for they hear thy words, but they do them not." How many perceive the beauty of Holiness, how few are holy! How many can speak well of Jesus, how few obey Him stedfastly or consistently! How many, in sickness or sorrow, when the Hand of God is heavy upon them, or death is near, purpose strongly amendment of life, to break off some sin, cherish some Grace; how few, when their fear, or the pressure is removed, fulfil the promises they made! How many glow for the moment, and their hearts will burn within them, at some deed of love, or some thought of good to Christ's members or their fellow-men; how few really set themselves in earnest, themselves to practise self-denying charity! How are people wrought upon for the time, by the presence of the good, (and rightly, since true Christians are temples of the Holy Ghost); how does it all pass away like a dream, as soon as they are withdrawn from it! How does change of place affect almost all, so that they seem to themselves almost different selves! How different, in many, their habits on this Holy-day and those of the remainder of the week; their prayers from their lives; themselves out of temptation and in it, as though they might, without ruin to their souls, put on and off their religion like Sunday apparel! As if they might divide their service between God and Mammon, and give to Mammon six-sevenths of their being, if as they think, they reserve some fraction of the one-seventh, the Lord's Day, to God! or as if having *had* good feelings, if these pass not into action, were not rather their condemnation! For what says Scripture of "the earth, which drinketh in the rain that cometh oft upon it,[k] and yet beareth briars and thorns?" "It is rejected and is nigh unto cursing; whose end is to be burned." And yet some, so far from thinking themselves in any danger, think all is well, and that their very safety consists therein, if from time to time they can but feel, or work themselves up to feel, an interest in holy things and their Redeemer's Love, Who gave Himself wholly for us that we might be wholly His, Who died, not to redeem us

[k] Heb. vi. 7, 8.

only, that we "should live unto ourselves," but to sanctify us unto Himself, a "peculiar people, zealous of good works.[l]" How many, again, begin life well, more or less, and, as life advances, some fall by this temptation, others by that; some by grievous, flagrant sins; over some worldliness creeps the more securely, because they think much of themselves, as being exempt from such sins. And so each successive trial thins the ranks of Christ's faithful soldiers. Many desert Him, the Captain of their Salvation, few return; so that the words of the Prophet are fulfilled, "What the palmer-worm hath left, hath the locust eaten; and what the locust hath left, hath the canker-worm eaten; and what the canker-worm hath left, hath the caterpillar eaten.[m]" What escapes or holds out against one passion is destroyed by another. So that, in the decay of this corruptible world, what remaineth as a harvest unto our God? Again, of those who would walk with God, how is what they have gathered in Lent, or the Season of the Passion, wasted often in Easter! What should be a season of living to Christ, is a living to the flesh, which had been chastened; and for Joy in God, we have joy in His enemy, the world, and men keep the Feast of Christ their Passover, by passing back to what they were before. How common is it, again, for persons even to make some diligent preparation for the Holy Communion, and then, when they have received Him for Whom they prepared, (as our Liturgy saith from Holy Scripture, "then we dwell in Christ, and Christ in us") to think of nothing less than of Him Whom they have prayed to come under their roof. So that the reason why most Communions profit people so little, is, that they take so little care, afterwards, that they should profit them; so little regard His Presence in their soul, their Life, their God, and their All.

And not so only; but man has no safety in himself, that he rush not at once from fervid zeal to some great fall. The Apostle who said, "Though I die with Thee, I will not deny Thee in any wise," was he who did deny his Lord. The multitude who cried, "Hosanna to the Son of David,"

[l] Tit. ii. 14. [m] Joel i. 4.

was the same which cried "Not This Man, but Barabbas." "Crucify Him." The poor heathen, whom Paul and Barnabas "could scarcely restrain, that they had not done sacrifice unto them,[n]" were soon persuaded to consent that Paul should be stoned. Even now, alas! it happens often that, among some who do not keep habitual guard over their acts, eagerness in the things of God ends in deadly sins of the flesh.

And now, what should we do, when, in this fleeting world, nothing, not even Virtue, abideth at one stay? When Grace, good feelings, holy thoughts, earnest purposes, good desires, kindled longings after Him, the soul's All; Motions of His Good Spirit, His Presence in the soul, Heavenly Visitations, His Gracious Calls, stillness of our passions, inward prayer, joy in Him; all seem like Gleams from Heaven, flashing on the darkness of our souls, and ever ready to depart, what is our hope? What should be our hope, when all fleeteth, but in Him Who Alone abideth? What, when "nothing continueth at one stay," but in Him Who Alone is our Stay? "And now, Lord! what is my hope? Truly, my hope is even in Thee.[o]" "Abide with us, Lord." To this very end does Jesus make as if He would go further, that we may stay Him, and reverently say to Him, "I will not let Thee go, unless Thou bless me;[p]" or with the Spouse, "I have found Him Whom my soul loveth; I held Him, and will not let Him go.[q]"

To this end doth every thing seem ready to pass away, that we may hold nothing as our own, be secure of nothing; hold all of God, and be thereby doubly blessed, both in His Gift, and in receiving it ever, again and again, from Him, the Giver. It is the very bliss of the creature, it will be the bliss of Eternity, to have nothing of our own, but to be for ever filled with "the Torrent of Pleasure" flowing forth from His Throne; His Love streaming forth to us in Goodness, and, from us, returning to Him in loving adoration. And since our fall was through seeking out of Him what we could find in Him Alone, so it helpeth to restore us, as it is

[n] Acts xiv. 18, 19. [o] Ps. xxxix. 8. [p] Gen. xxxii. 26. [q] Cant. iii. 4.

a prelude of Eternal Bliss, that for every breath of our life, every Grace of our soul, every use of every faculty of our mind, every thought of our heart, every word of our lips, every act of the will, every purpose ere it becomes a deed, every deed which in Him we purpose to do, we should hang wholly upon Him, ever receiving all anew from Him, ever anew giving back all to Him, holding nothing of His as if it were in our power, but "our eyes," for all, "waiting[r] upon Thee, O Lord."

He giveth His Grace, that we may know His Sweetness; He seemeth to withdraw It, that He may draw us up after It to Himself. He sheweth Himself that we may love Him; He hideth Himself that we may long for Him, and the more we seek Him, the more may find Him. He passeth quickly from our sight, if we turn ever so little away from Him, that we may know how precious a Treasure He is, not to be held by careless hands, or contained in a divided heart. But readily is He found of those who seek Him, and would stedfastly keep Him, and their love constraineth Him. The disciples had no sooner said, "Abide with us," but Jesus went in to tarry with them. He came nearer than before; He became their Guest; as He saith, "Behold[s] I stand at the door and knock; if any man hear My Voice and open the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with Me." He had knocked at the door of their hearts, and their hearts had bounded at His Voice, and were kindled at it. Yet not only so; they were not content to have felt; they longed for a closer nearness, a dearer bond; they wished that He should not be a Stranger with them by the way, but a Dweller in their home; not a Teacher only without, but that He should abide with them; and He gave them more than all their hearts desired. Whom knowing not, they loved, He opened their eyes that they might see, and seeing might know. He gave Himself to them, and "in the Breaking of Bread" He opened their eyes; as now, too, in the Holy Eucharist, they who long for Him, taste of His Sweetness, "sweeter than honey and the honeycomb;" and His

[r] Ps. cxiv. 15.

[s] Rev. iii. 20.

Light often streams upon their soul, and they feel that they have been beneath His Cross, and been washed and bedewed with His Blood.

And these were no chief Apostles, lest we should think that this was too high a Gift for us. Yea, He appeareth to those before the Eleven; first after the two penitents, St. Mary Magdalene and St. Peter, to show that He Who chose "the[t] weak things of the world, to confound the mighty," will choose us too, if we be little in our own eyes, and mourn over His absence from our souls, and muse over His Words, and listen to His Rebuke, through whomsoever He chideth us (for it is He, though we see Him not) and constrain Him to stay with us.

Be this then our Wisdom, our Joy, our Stay in time, our Hope for Eternity, "in all the changes and chances of this mortal life," morning by morning, and evening by evening; in the morning of our days, if it be yet morning with any of us, and still more, if it be towards evening with us, and the night is drawing on; in the glad morning of our joy and consolation, or in the evening of tribulation and loneliness; in the morning, when the Light of His Countenance is shed around us, and shineth into our souls, and in the evening, when darkness cometh over us, and mists of temptation hide His Presence from us, be this the Joy of our joys, the Comfort of our tears. "'Abide with us, Lord!' For without Thee, this world's light, and all the purest joys of the whole world, were but a false glare, cold and comfortless to the soul. With Thee, Who art Light and Love, all darkness is Light and Joy."

> "Abide[u] with us from morn till eve,
> For without Thee we cannot live;
> Abide with us when night is nigh,
> For without Thee we dare not die."

Precious, above the price of the whole world, is every moment in which Christ speaks to the soul. All the Love of God throughout Eternity, our place in Heaven, our degree of Bliss, our measure of that Love which passeth mea-

[t] 1 Cor. i. 27. [u] Christian Year. Evening.

sure, our very portion, for ever, in Heaven or in Hell, may depend on our choice, whether, when Jesus speaks to our souls, we hearken to Him, and, in reverence, detain Him, or whether we turn away to the cares, and riches, and pleasures of this world. Waves they are in this troublesome world, which, if we linger not, bear us on to the Everlasting Shore; if we stay, we are swept back again amid its breakers, there to be tossed and buffeted, and it is of God's Mercy only, if we ever gain the shore.

"It is matter of great skill," says a holy writer,[x] to know how to hold converse with Jesus; and to know how to keep Jesus, a point of great wisdom."

"When Jesus is present all is well, and nothing seems difficult; but when Jesus is not present, every thing is hard."

"When Jesus speaks not inwardly to us, all other comfort is nothing worth; but if Jesus speak but one word, we feel great consolation."

"How dry and hard art thou without Jesus! How foolish and vain if thou desire any thing out of Jesus!"

"What can the world profit thee without Jesus? To be without Jesus is a grievous Hell; and to be with Jesus a sweet Paradise."

"If Jesus be with thee, no enemy shall be able to hurt thee."

"He that findeth Jesus, findeth a good Treasure, yea, a Good above all good."

"And he that loseth Jesus, loseth much indeed, yea, more than the whole world."

"Be thou humble and peaceable, and Jesus will stay with thee. Be devout and quiet, and Jesus will stay with thee."

"Thou mayest soon drive away Jesus and lose His Favour, if thou wilt turn aside to outward things."

"And if thou shouldest drive Him from thee and lose Him, unto whom wilt thou flee, and whom wilt thou seek for thy Friend?"

"Without a friend thou canst not well live; and if Jesus

[x] Imitation of Christ, ii. 8, p. 51, Oxf. Tr.

be not, above all, a Friend to thee, thou shalt be indeed sad and desolate."

Listen we then to every whisper of our conscience; "do this; do not that; speak not that word of vanity, or unkindness, or untruth, or exaggeration; avoid this or that evil society." It is Jesus Who, within, is speaking to us by His Spirit. Hearken we to every Call which rouses us to more diligent, devoted service; to love Him Alone, meditate on His Passion, share His Sufferings, by bearing patiently what He lays upon us, or by denying ourselves for those for whom, with us, He died. It is Jesus saying to us, "O fools and slow of heart to believe all that the Prophets have spoken! Ought not Christ to have suffered these things, and to enter into His Glory?" "And if He entered not into His Own Glory without suffering, think we, without suffering, to enter, not into ours but, into His?[y]" He speaketh to us, and cometh to us, and is with us, in every thing by which He would win us back from the world, or draw us to Himself. If a deep Scripture Word pierces our souls as it never did before, He it is Who is Speaking to us. He cometh to us in another and another Form, while our eyes are holden; in Sorrow or in Joy; in Fast or Feast; in Humiliation or Forgiveness; in Stern Words of Reproving or Gentle Tones of Love; in awe of His Majesty or the Soft Whisperings of His Mercy. We may know His Presence by the deep, breathless stirrings of our hearts. He Who made the heart, He it is Who shaketh it. He it is Who bids us "bestir ourselves,[z]" "for the Lord goeth out before" us, to subdue our enemies before our face.

Only, in all we say, think, do, fear, hope, enjoy, let us say "Abide with us Lord." We fear our own unsteadfastness; "Lord, abide with us!" The foe is strong, and we, through our sins, weak; "Lord, abide with us," and be our Strength. We are ever subject to change, and ebb, and flow; "Abide with us, Lord," with Whom "is no change.[a]" The pleasures of the world would lead us from Thee; "Abide with us, Lord," and be Thou our Joy. The troubles of the world would shake

y From S. Bernard. z 2 Sam. v. 24. a S. James i. 17.

our endurance; "Abide with us, Lord," and bear them in us, as Thou didst bear them for us. Thou art our Refreshment in weariness; Thou our Comfort in trouble; Thou our Refuge in temptation; Thou in death our Life; Thou in Judgment our Redeemer.

If our Lord give thee any fervour in prayer, say to Him "Abide with me, Lord!" Use the fervour He giveth, to stretch on to some higher fervour, to long for some more burning, deeper love; not as though thou couldest gain it for thyself, but, as emboldened by Him Who hath "held[b] out His golden Sceptre" of His Righteousness and Mercy unto thee, that thou mayest "touch it," and ask what thou wilt. For what wouldest thou but what He willeth yet more to give than thou to ask, what, but for His Gift thou couldest not ask, the ineffable Fulness of His Love? "Abide with me, Lord," as Thou hast said "If[c] ye abide in Me and My Words abide in you, ye shall ask what ye will, and it shall be done unto you." If He permit thee to be tried with dryness of spirit, yet still leaveth in thee a yearning for His Love, and thou seem to have no power to love, (thou couldest not so yearn unless He dwelt in thy heart), say on, "Abide with me, Lord," and He, in His good time, will fill thy hungry, famished, fainting soul, with the abundance of His Goodness. If thou seem to have no token of His Presence, but a hatred of thyself and thy past sin, (thou couldest not have it but for His Presence in thy soul), still say to Him, humbly and lowlily, "Abide with me, Lord," and thy sin shall not again gain the mastery over thee, so long as thou so prayest, and He will turn the intense loathing of thyself and thy past sin into a deep love of Himself, thy Redeemer. If thou art but just and hardly recovered from any ever so deep mire of years of habitual sin, and still tremblest, as though thou wert yet on the brink of the dark lake wherein thou wert plunged and steeped, and as if Satan could put forth his hand to pluck thee back into it, and thy unsteadied step would, through force of passion or a sort of necessity, reel back into it, still say to thy Deliverer,

[b] Esther v. 2. [c] S. John xv. 7.

(One only could deliver for a single day from that deep gulf!) "Abide with me, Lord;" and He will keep thee, day by day, as thou prayest, "sitting at His Feet and in" thy "right mind." Only never lose Him out of thy sight, nor fail to pray "Abide with me," and give me perseverance unto the end and in the end. If the mists of thy besetting master passion seem to drive over thy mind and overcloud it, and thou seem to thyself almost reckless, and as if thou couldest forfeit thy All, but must, in a sort of frenzy, yield to this, pause but a moment, clasp thy hands together and say "Abide with me, Lord!" and a ray of light from Him, the Sun of Righteousness, shall pierce through the darkness which was closing around thee, and thou shalt hate its foulness, and love the pureness of the Light from Above.

And all of us, especially when we pray Him, at Holy Communion, to come under our roof, pray we Him also "Abide with us, Lord," "Why[d] shouldest Thou be as a stranger and as a way-faring man, that turneth aside to tarry for the night?" "Abide with me, Lord," in the Love and Grace I prayed for, "that" I "may bring forth fruit,[e] and my fruit may remain," and the glowing Breath of Thy Spirit "blow[f] upon our garden, that the spices thereof may flow out" in the fragrance of love and deeds of love, to the praise of Him Who gave them. Be very careful that, through forgetfulness or eagerness about common things, or thy bodily food, thou lose not sight of Him; but gather thyself often together into the chamber of thy heart, whither thou hast prayed Him to come; commune with Him there, shew Him thy needs, and pray Him to abide with thee therein, and fill it with His Love. And when thou mayest not receive Him in the Sacrament, pray Him to come and abide with thee by His Spirit.

If Satan would withdraw thee from prayer by weariness, hold thou on the firmer; say "Abide with me, Lord," and He will be with thee in thy prayer. If distracted by worldly cares or toils, say "Abide with me, Lord," and commit thy care to Him, and He will knit thee up. If tempted to

[d] Jerem. xiv. 8. [e] S. John xv. 16. [f] Cant. iv. 16.

despond, by fear of falling, and to give up, still say "Abide with me, Lord," and thou shalt feel His Nearness, and that "He is a very present Help in trouble.[g]" If lured by worldly hopes, or pleasures, or vanities, say "Abide with me, Lord," and thou shalt feel within thee a joy nearer and deeper than all earthly joy, gladness more inward than all pleasure, truth which shall scatter all vanities. If harassed by want of sensible love, or dread of death, say on, "Abide with me, Lord," and He shall say to thy inmost soul, "Fear not;" "Fear no evil, for I am with thee, My rod and My staff they shall comfort thee.[h]"

"Abide with me, Lord," shall heal every sickness and fainting of thy soul, hush its every fear, soothe every beating of thy heart. For in the soul which calleth Jesus, He Himself dwells; and where He is, is Salvation, and Peace, and Life, and Love. Only pray "Lord, abide with us," "in all time of thy tribulation, in all time of thy prosperity, in the hour of death, and in the Day of Judgment," and when "all[i] flesh" shall have become "as grass, and all the glory of man as the flower of grass," and the "rich man have faded away in his ways," and the "earth and all the works therein shall be burned up," He, "the Lord, the Word of God, Who abideth for ever," shall abide with thee and thou with Him for ever.

"Abide with us," that we may abide in Thee, O Good Jesu, Thou God of our Salvation!

[g] Ps. xlvi. 1. [h] S. Luke xii. 32.; Ps. xxiii. 4.
[i] 1 S. Peter i. 24, 25.; S. James i. 11.; 2 S. Peter iii. 10.

SERMON XIX.

THE CHRISTIAN'S LIFE HID IN CHRIST.

EASTER.

COLOSSIANS III. 2.

"*For ye are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God.*"

WE are in the midst of two worlds, a seen and an unseen, as we ourselves are two selves, one seen and the other unseen, a body which is seen and a soul unseen; and the unseen putting itself forth, from time to time, among the things which are seen, shewing itself in our countenance, at the last marking it in a degree, and impressing some portion of our character upon it, yet still, for the most part, unseen, except by God. And even our very soul is of a twofold character, belonging in part to the world of sense, fitted to act upon it and to be acted upon by it, in part to the unseen world; and belonging most to either, according as the corrupt nature which we inherited from Adam, or the new life, communicated through Union with our Lord, gains the mastery. And each of these worlds is in one way real; in that each acts upon our soul, and forms real impressions upon it, and moulds it for an eternal existence, in Heaven or Hell. But to us, that only is real which we realise. As we live to the seen world or to the unseen, to the god of this world or to Him Who is God of gods

and Lord of lords, so are they real to us. Our soul hangeth, as it were, between the two worlds, and as it is drawn down to things of sense, or upwards toward that Unapproachable Glory wherein God dwells, so does it live, as it were, within the sphere of Heavenly things or of earthly, is taken into either, and, in the things which are ever present to it, loses sight of those from which it is withdrawn. As persons are most conversant about flesh or spirit, they acquire faculties for perceiving that, and lose the power of understanding the other.

To fleshly persons this seen world is their all; they have no senses for the unseen, which they love not. As persons become gradually sunk in sin and the flesh, they lose the power of understanding any thing but what relates to the things of the flesh and the world. As every thing reminds the Christian of his better choice, his Heavenly home, so every thing speaks to the fleshly of the flesh. The fleshly loses the power to think of God, to conceive of God. The truths relating to God, if he knew them, become fainter and fainter to him; they become indistinct and confused; they fall at last upon his ear, but he cannot set them before him; he cannot see, believe, realise them; he sees not why he cannot believe them, he knows that he ought to believe them; he sees that they are truths, that they have a real eternal existence; but they come to him as belonging to others, not to himself; they have no real existence for him. His existence is in the world which he has chosen. In many dreadful cases, even the things and words of God bring to his mind, thoughts of the flesh only. He can think of God only, Scripture says, "wickedly, as such an one as himself."

The natural mind can think of God only as a part of the world, as one with the world; and the world as God. Among the heathen we see this most nakedly. The gods whom they worshipped were parts of the world; they were the powers of nature, as we call them, that is, the properties given by God to this material world; the elements of which it is made up; the Heavenly host, sun, moon, and stars; his

own passions, love, hatred, vengeance; and, at last, even those of the brute creation in whom man's passions most show themselves. Even their wiser could think of God, mostly only as a part of the world and pent up within it. And even in this day, they who "will not retain God in their knowledge," as He revealed Himself, have come, step by step, to this, to think of Him only as one with the world. This is what Holy Scripture teaches. "Forasmuch[a] as they would not retain God in their knowledge, God gave them over to an undistinguishing mind." "Because that, when they knew God, they glorified Him not as God, neither were thankful," they "became vain in their imaginations, and their foolish heart was darkened. Professing themselves to be wise, they became fools, and changed the Glory of the Incorruptible God into an image made like to corruptible man, and to birds, and four-footed beasts, and creeping things." "The pure[b] in heart shall see God." The impure, then, cannot see Him. "In His Light shall we see light.[c]" They, then, who have not His Light in them, how must they not be blind? The "natural[d] man cannot contain the things of the Spirit of God, neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned."

In like way, as men become spiritual, they, too, lose their power of discernment, but of the things of the flesh. The world becomes to them unreal; they cannot understand it, nor the world them. Having learnt to desire to be last, they cannot understand man's ambition to be first in this world's fleeting pageant; nor covetousness, having learnt that poverty in Christ is the true riches; nor pride, knowing the blessedness of humility; nor luxury, having learnt hardness; nor show, having learnt simplicity. It is a ghastly sight for one who has, for a time, been separated from the world, to be placed again in its haunts; to see its countenances all intent; marked with care, but for the things of this world; each pressing eagerly, as if in pursuit of somewhat, and *that* vanity; to hear the false maxims it

[a] Rom. i. 28, 21, 22, 23.
[b] S. Matt. v. 8.
[c] Ps. xxxvi. 9.
[d] 1 Cor. ii. 14.

holds to be true; the deadly pleasures which it accounts its life; how it is "walking[e] in a vain show and disquieting itself in vain," walking about in a dream, yet thinking its dream alone real, until God awaken it, if not before, to Judgment. The sounds, and words, and maxims, and pursuits, of the world are unreal to the Christian; they come to him as a feverish dream, full of tumult and excitement, and of forms passing to and fro confusedly, but having no real being or existence; all seems hollow; a form without a substance; its merriment, a heaviness; its eagerness, a chasing the wind; its show, a painted mask; its laughter, madness; its pleasures revolting; its honour, dishonour; yea, in a degree, does the true Christian come to have "the Mind of Christ," and, by His Light, to see as He seeth, and "the things[f] which are highly esteemed among men are," in his sight also, as in God's, "abominable."

All this we may *know* from Holy Scripture, but they only see and feel it who act upon it. Most know either imperfectly. Men are sinking or rising into either state, slowly, imperceptibly, amid the resistance of the flesh which would hold them down, or themselves resisting the Good Spirit of God, Which would uphold them. All in this world is tending only to its end, although that end will be fixed for ever. Whatever remains of sin in the Christian, blinds him in that degree to the death and deadliness of the world. Whatever remains of God's Holy Spirit in the world's worshipper, casts, from time to time, a lightning gleam amidst his darkness, and discovers to him the death with which he is encompassed and to which he is tending, and he knoweth "that[g] the dead are there and that the guests" of sin "are in the depths of Hell."

Since, then, the Christian's "life is hid," it follows that we must not be surprised if the world misunderstand and speak hardly of those who would be Christ's. It is *because* they are Christ's, that the world understandeth them not. "Behold," says the beloved disciple,[h] "what manner of love the

[e] Ps. xxxix. 6.
[f] 1 Cor. ii. 16.; S. Luke xvi 15.
[g] Prov. ix. 18.
[h] 1 S. John iii. 1.

Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God; *therefore* the world knoweth us not, because it knew Him not." The Christian, in that he hath the life of Christ, must in all things, be partaker with Christ. Since Christ was not understood, neither will the Christian. Since "He[i] was in the world" "and the world knew Him not," neither will it know those who are His. Since the world hated Him, so will it hate those whom He has chosen out[k] of it. "If they have kept My Saying," He saith,[l] "they will keep yours also." So far then from being surprised, if the world misjudge any who would live unto God, they should take it cheerfully, as what must needs be. It is an eternal law that we can understand those only, to whom we are ourselves like. We have no power of judging, except by the principles and standard which we have made our own. We cannot see what is beyond our own range of vision, whether it be naturally contracted, or we have ourselves narrowed it. We cannot judge of things spiritual, however real, if they lie beyond us. If we measure by a crooked rule, what is straight will seem crooked; if any use false weights, what is true will seem untrue. The world, then, judging by its own maxims, cannot understand the Christian. It could not act upon his principles, and therefore must think him a dissembler, pursuing its own ends by other means, or it must hold him mad. His acts it believes not, or what it believes it must ascribe to unreal motives. And the higher his aims, the less can it understand them. It was when our Lord, in His intentness on His Ministry, could not so much as eat bread, that his kinsmen said "He is beside Himself.[m]" It was when He declared high unwelcome truth, that the Jews said[n] "say we not well, that Thou art a Samaritan and hast a devil?" The Gospel, which declares most of His high sayings, also records most how it was said to Him "Thou hast a devil.[o]" It was when St. Paul was declaring the Resurrection of Christ, that Festus burst forth "thou art beside thyself; much learning hath

[i] S. John i. 10. [k] Ib. xv. 19. [l] Ib. 20. [m] S. Mark iii. 21.
[n] S. John viii. 48. [o] Ib. vii 20.; vii. 52.; x. 20.

made thee mad.[p]" Our Lord forewarns us, "if[q] they have called the Master of the house Beelzebub, how much more them of His household." We, indeed, must ever remember that if we are not understood, it may be that we too well deserve this. An inconsistent Christian, as most are when they begin, and as most of us must, in our degree, continue, is, of all things, to Angels and the world, the most inexplicable. To see that we must hasten forward and yet load ourselves with those things which will hold us back; to look with one eye toward Heaven and gaze with the other amid the vanities of the world; to seek, with one foot, to walk straight onward, while with the other we are turning aside out of God's way; to be walking one while toward Heaven and yet allowing ourselves in the things which lead to Hell; how must not this seem unreal in the eyes of the world? how can it think us other than itself, when it sees us in many things so like itself? But miserable as it is to give this excuse to the world for not understanding us, it will ever be what is good in any that it will not understand. And therefore, so far from being dismayed that the world thinks us hypocrites, having, in what we do, other ends in view than we have, dissemblers, unreal; whoever would serve Christ must account it his portion. We must humble ourselves all along that we give occasion to others to judge us unkindly, but be content to be misjudged. And this is one chief obstacle in the outset of our Christian course. Like the demoniac in the Gospel, in the Presence of our Lord, the world, in the presence of His servants, feels that it has a devil. "My name," says[r] the poor sufferer, "is legion; for we are many." And therefore, to free itself from this consciousness, it would rid itself of what brings it home. Hence its eagerness to retain or absorb into itself those who, by forsaking its ways, become a reproach to it. Hence the mockery of the young, or the unrestrained, at those more earnest than themselves; the scoffs, false motives imputed; the readiness to believe every thing untrue, every thing which may detract; the hint that such an one is, in

[p] Acts xxvi. 24. [q] S. Matt. x. 25. [r] S. Mark v. 9.

secret, no better than others. And it is our wisdom, and comfort, and advancement to know that this must be, and to seek no remedy. The world must misjudge. And God would thereby teach us to commit ourselves to His Judgment, not to the world's. "Commit[s] thy way unto the Lord; trust also in Him; and He shall bring forth thy righteousness as the light, and thy judgment as the noon-day." They who are most like Christ will be least understood by the world; and where we see one, whose holiness we know, much misunderstood, it seems a token the more of his especial nearness to his Lord. So would God, by all things, draw us off from the world, teaching us, by its misunderstandings, to look to Him, by Whom Alone we are known; by its enmity, to love Him; by its dispraise, to seek His Praise; by its want of sympathy, to seek to be "hid with Christ in" Him.

Heed it not, then, when ye would live more the hidden life to God, if ye are indeed hidden to the world. Count it no strange thing, if the world call your lives folly or madness, if they, whose broad path ye would leave, jest or scoff at you, that ye do not as they; if they count it a pretence as though ye would be better than others; or think your life dull and insipid, and yourselves, (as it is in youth) tame, and poor spirited, and fearful,—the very tempers praised by the Gospel. The poor world must so judge. The veil is on its eyes. It cannot live the life of sense and know the unseen secret joys of those who live "hid with God." They who live amid the tumult of this outward world, cannot hear the secret Whispers of His Love, by which God speaks to the souls that seek Him. They cannot tell the secret thrill of joy, in the hope that we are indeed God's and shall be His for ever; they cannot tell the sweetness when the soul feels itself beloved; they cannot see that ray of light which darts on the soul, through the chinks of this our prison-house, telling us of the Brightness of that Unspeakable Light wherein those who love shall see God. "This was he," so shall the wicked say,[t] when the end, now unseen,

[s] Ps. xxxvii. 5, 6.

[t] Wisd. v. 3, 4, 5.

shall be revealed, "This was he," whom we had sometime in derision and a proverb of reproach; we fools counted his life madness and his end to be without honour. How is he numbered among the children of God, and his lot is among the saints!"

Then, also for ourselves, since our life is hid, and we understand only so much as we, by acting, know, we must beware how we prejudge any thing not to be useful to us, which comes to us in the form of untried self-discipline, or self-denial. For it is by trial only that we know it. It is one of the most frequent hindrances to "a[u] more excellent way," that instead of trying it, men ask, of what good is it? To what good, men ask, to fast, to watch, to forego pleasures, to deny self? And thereby they only shew, that not not having fasted or used self-denial, they know not, (as they cannot know,) what they are. And, even afterwards, men oft-times shrink back from what they are called to, thinking that they do well enough as they are; that such or such a change to which they are secretly drawn, would have no real effect upon them. And as all Faith is the realizing beforehand things unseen,[x] so it is the characteristic of a noble faith, to act on dim intimations of some holier, stricter life, to which God would lead it, follow the Unseen Hand Which beckons it on, catch the slight hints put within it, or the secret stirrings of the heart, and gird itself, following the leadings of God's Blessed Angel out of the prison-house of our mortality, although not knowing whither it is being led, or what is being done with it. St. Augustine records how, in his unconverted state, he was amazed at the self-denying life of St. Ambrose; how he admired what St. Ambrose most dreaded, that "personages so great held him in such honour," thought hardest, what was his self-discipline. "What[y] hope he bore within him, what struggles he had against the temptations which beset his very excellencies, or what comfort in adversities, and what sweet joys Thy Bread had for the hidden mouth of his soul;—I neither could conjecture, nor had experienced." At every

[u] 1 Cor. xii. 31. [x] Heb. xi. 1. [y] S. Aug. Conf. vi. 3.

stage of life, knowledge is the reward of obedience. Would we know the value of any thing, we must do it.

And in this our course, since our life is hid, neither must we be downcast, if we have not all the refreshment we would have, nor see at once the end of our actions or our own. "Beloved[z], now are we the sons of God, but it doth not yet appear what we shall be." As the full life of the blessed is hid even from the saints here, and from that Ineffable Light which it is, there flash forth only some gleams of bliss, in fervent prayer, in Sacraments, in contemplation of our Lord, which come to us as Angel-tokens from His Presence, so throughout, in each portion of our life. We are hidden from ourselves. We know not what we are. We see ourselves, as we are, encompassed by death, and, amidst this death, have earnests of life. We have "the First-fruits[a] of the Spirit" putting themselves forth in love, and faith, and hope; but since our love is imperfect, so is our life and our sense of life. The Source of our life is our Lord, hidden in God, streaming forth thence upon us, through the Blessed Comforter, discovering itself in holy aspirations, the yearnings of the soul, the "unutterable groanings" wherewith we long to be freed from our remaining death, hidden strength, unseen victories; but since it is hidden, we must not long for it, as though it were already revealed. Had we the fulness of that life, it were Heaven itself. Now we have at one time the Brightness of His Presence, at another, It is veiled from us; that we may be cheered onward when It is shining upon us, and humbled when It is withdrawn; that, in Its brightness we may lose all other love, in Its withdrawal hate ourselves and our own sins; so, whether in the heaviness of the night or the joy of the morning, refreshment or depression, the "pillar of fire" or the "cloud" shall alike conduct us, night and day, to the Canaan of our everlasting rest and joy.

And it will ever be, that of this hidden life, the very highest degrees will be what we least understand. For it is of God. And since, being finite, we cannot comprehend the

[z] 1 S. John iii. 2. [a] Rom viii. 23.

Infinite, our nearest approaches to Him will ever be what we can least grasp or analyse.[b] When "caught up into the third Heaven," what St. Paul heard were "words unspeakable[c];" his inward sense heard what speech could not embody. And so, in our degree, our highest bliss is what we can least represent, or define, or reason on; yet we know it to be real. It tells of our Saviour's Body and Blood; they are "unutterable groanings," longings, in which we pass out of ourselves, and "know not" what to ask or what we ask, "what to pray for as we ought, but the Spirit Itself[d]" within us "maketh Intercession for us, according to the Will of God."

And as these two lives in different individuals vary endlessly, and exist perhaps in as many degrees as there are human souls, so in each individual they are in a constant change, with many an ebb and flow, yet on the whole setting one way, until they reach that point where his lot shall remain fixed for ever. Men mark it not, and cannot trace it day by day; yet as day after day, unmarked, amid re-

[b] "When the mind is hung aloft in the height of contemplation, whatever it has power to see perfectly and completely is not God, but when it sees something of great fineness, this is the same as that he hears belonging to the Incomprehensible Substance of the Deity. For we, as it were, perceive *a still small voice*, when by a moment's contemplation we taste with finest sense the savour of Incomprehensible Truth. Accordingly then only is what we know concerning God true, when we feel that we cannot know any thing fully concerning Him." S Greg. Mor. B. v. § 66. t. i. p. 293. Oxf. Tr.

"The intervening mist of sin is first wiped away from the eye of the mind, by burning sorrow; and it is then enlightened by the bright Coruscations of the Boundless Light swiftly flashing upon it. At which sight, seen after its measure, it is absorbed in a kind of rapturous security; and carried beyond itself, as though the present life had ceased to be, it is refreshed in a manner by a kind of new being. The mind is then besprinkled with the infusion of heavenly dews from an Inexhaustible Fountain. It there discerns that it is not sufficient for that enjoyment, to which it has been hurried, and from feeling the truth, it sees that it does not discern how great that truth is. And it counts itself to be further removed from this truth, the nearer it approaches to it, because unless it beheld it in a certain degree, it would never feel that it was unable really to behold it." Ib. B. xxiv. § 11. t. iii. p. 56, 7. Oxf. Tr., and compare a beautiful passage, ib. B. xxiii. § 41—43, p. 36-7.; and in Ezek., l. ii. hom. 6. § 1. "One thing is contemplation, which seeth so much as it cannot utter; another is knowledge and doctrine, which seeth so much as it can express in words. For in comparison with that Light which cannot be expressed in words, all which can be expressed in words, is as it were without us."

[c] 2 Cor. xii. 2. 4.

[d] Rom. viii. 26.

freshment and weariness, are doing their work upon our earthly frames, and preparing them for their last decay, so day after day trace their lines upon our souls, unseen at the time, yet plain and marked at longer intervals. Yet doth not the life of the Spirit decay without notice, as of course it cannot grow without effort. People are half-conscious of decay, while blinding themselves to it. Some sins cast a blight over the life at once; in others the world steals gradually over and dims it, and they find that they cannot realize things spiritual as they once did; they become painfully alive to things of sense; they feel that they are not as they should be, yet see no remedy. There is but one.

As this hidden life is obtained by deadness to the world—"ye are dead and your life is hid with Christ in God"—so, by that deadness, is it to be cherished, maintained, perfected. Death to the world is life to God; the life in God deadens to the world. By Baptism we were made partakers of Christ's Death, that we might henceforth share His Life. We were deadened that we might remain dead, and His imparted Life absorb into Itself our whole selves, and quicken us in every part, that we might live to Him, be dead to all out of Him. Since that hour each act of sin, (much more if any of us unhappily continued in any course of sin), has been a revival of that which was dead, a minishing of our life. Self-indulgence of every sort, following our own wills, love of pre-eminence, of man's praise, covetousness, self-display, self-applause, deadens our inward life. And so now, each act of obedience, renunciation of ourselves and of self-will, deadness to the world's applause, its idols, its covetousness, to "the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eye, the pride of life," is an increase of our hidden life. The less we live for things outward, the stronger burns our inward life. The more we live amid the distractions of the world, the less vivid is the life of the soul. The more we live to things unseen, the less hold will this world of sense have over us. The more we make any thing seen our end, any thing short of approving ourselves to God, the more will our hidden life

decay. It matters not wherein we are employed, but how. We may in the most sacred things forget God, or in the most common things serve Him. We may be promoting His Truth, and ourselves be but the unfruitful conduit through which It flows to water the earth; or we may in the meanest things of this earth be living to His Glory and thereby promoting it. Every thing seen, even the outward Coming of God's Kingdom, may make men lose sight of God; in every meanest duty the quickened eye may see Him the Invisible. Self-denying duty, love, and contemplation, together advance this hidden life. Alone, self-denying duty were austere and hard; love were weak and faint; contemplation but imaginative or sensual. Together, self-denial deadens the flesh; deeds of love soften the spirit; contemplation fixes the soul upon God.[e] Without self-denial and love, contemplation could not be; without it, even they would abide on earth. Deeds of self-denying active love may still leave the soul very imperfect in love, unless it habitually and consciously refer them to God as their Beginning and their End; and out of, or amidst, or at intervals from, active service, withdraw from all created things to commune with its God. Even prayer will become lukewarm, unless it be fed by meditation upon God, and the soul be borne, beyond the words of its prayer, to dwell on Him Whom it would love[f]. In our very excellencies we

[e] "'Reading,' i. e. 'the diligent search into the Scriptures with attention of mind,' furnishes us the materials and sends us to 'meditation.' 'Meditation' inquires diligently what is to be desired, and digging up, as it were, a hid treasure, finds and points it out; but since of itself it cannot obtain it, sends us to prayer. Prayer with its whole strength lifting itself up to the Lord, obtains that much longed for treasure, the sweetness of contemplation. Contemplation coming rewards the labours of the three preceding, while it satisfieth the thirsty soul with the dew of heavenly sweetness." "Reading without meditation is arid; meditation without reading, erroneous; prayer without meditation is lukewarm; meditation without prayer unfruitful; prayer with devotion obtaineth contemplation; the obtaining of contemplation without prayer is rare or miraculous." Guigo Carthus. Scala Paradisi, c. 1. 10. 11. in App. Opp. S. Aug. t. vi.

[f] "The minds of those who contemplate, although they but slightly see something of the True Light, yet are enlarged in themselves by a wonderful expansion. And indeed even of the very things which they see, they can contain but little For very little is it of Eternity which they contemplating see; but, by that very little, the bosom of their minds is widened to an increase of fervor and of love: and admitting,

need continual checks, lest over-activity make us forget to sit at Jesus' Feet, or we think that we are sitting there, while we are seeking only the shade, and shrinking from "the burthen and heat of the day," from thankless toil and drying strife.[g]

This, then, is our office; to see how, day by day, we may be ourselves more hidden from the world, that we may be more with God; how to discharge our duties in it, so as more to forget ourselves and remember God only; to consider this only, how they may be done, so as best to please Him; how self may least mingle in them; to seek no bye-ends of our own, no applause of men, nor our own; rather to seek how we may escape men's praise, that we may win God's; escape men's sight and be seen by our "Father Who seeth in secret" only, and have that in store with Him, which He, "in the last day," "will reward openly;" to be content with the least; desire no more than we have; be thankful to escape the snares of those who have what we have not; be glad, if it may be, to have less, that others may abound; to disburden ourselves of wealth by giving to Christ's poor; forget self in others, love others in God; seek only to be "buried with Christ[h]" from this world and its vanities, hidden in His Tomb, so that all the show and pomps of this world may but flit around us as unreal things, but not catch our gaze, nor draw our hearts, which

as it were through a narrow orifice, the Light of Truth, they are thereby in themselves enlarged. Which greatness of contemplation can be given only to those 'who love'." S. Greg. in Ezek., l. ii. hom. 5. § 17.

[g] "The Redeemer of mankind in the day time exhibits His miracles in cities, and spends the night in devotion to prayer upon the mountain, that He may teach all perfect preachers, that they should neither entirely leave the active life from love of the speculative, nor wholly slight the joys of contemplation from excess in working; but in quiet imbibe by contemplation, what in employment they may pour back to their neighbours by word of mouth." S. Greg. Mor. vi. § 56, p. 355, Oxf. Tr. "The right order of living is to stretch forth from the active to the contemplative life. And so again it is mostly of advantage that the mind be turned back from the contemplative to the active; that so the active life may hold the more perfectly what the contemplative has kindled in it. The active life then ought to transmit us to the contemplative, and yet sometimes the contemplative had best recall us to the active out of that which we have beheld in the mind within." Ib., in Ezek., L. 2. hom. 2. § 11.

[h] Rom. vi. 4.

have been "buried with Him" and are now "risen with Him."

And as this is God's great Gift, and our present duty is to cherish it, so it is our stay and support, that "our life is hid with Christ in God." Then will this life's joys, and sorrows, and trials take their true form, when we know that our real "life is with Christ in God." For all which is in this world toucheth him not whose heart is with God. They are not his life, nor affect his life. We see, even in this world, how the deep grief of this world for the time deadens to the world. Such have lost what was their life, and the things of this world no more live to them. The churlish Nabal's "heart died within him," we are told,[i] "and he became as a stone," at the loss of worldly goods. In the loss of those we deeply love, or of some favourite object men had cherished, some honour they had sought, all around dies also; all besides is indifferent. Much more then, when our one end is God, does nothing outward affect our real life, which is "hid in Him." Our real life is beyond things without us; it is out of their reach; for it is with God. "Thou keepest in perfect peace the man whose mind is stayed on Thee, because he trusteth in Thee.[k]" "In the time of trouble He shall hide me in His Pavilion; in the secret of His Tabernacle shall He hide me.[l]" "Thou shalt hide them in the secret of Thy Presence from the provoking of men; Thou shalt keep them secretly, in a pavilion, from the strife of tongues.[m]" In that Inapproachable Presence, which no evil reacheth, is their dwelling-place. That Bright Presence of Light shall interpose between them and their adversaries. As evil reacheth Him not, so neither them whom He hideth with Himself. Losses affect not him "who counteth all things loss, that he may win Christ;" he thereby loseth not, he rather winneth God. Dispraise hurteth not him, who seeketh only the Praise of God; nor loneliness, if thereby he may become more alone with God. Close to his very heart as may any loss or trial come,

[i] 1 Sam. xxv. 37.
[k] Is. xxvi. 3.
[l] Ps. xxvii. 5.
[m] Ps. xxxi. 20.

there is yet One nearer to him, God; "with Favour wilt Thou compass him as with a shield." Nearly as may any thing threaten him, there is yet an inner defence enwrapping him, his God. Whatever may assault him, it cannot reach his life, since this is "hid" in the Source of Life, "with Christ in God."

And if so now, how much more hereafter! If in the troubles of these few short years, it be our comfort and stay, that our life is not here, how much more in that Day of trouble, which decides Eternity! If it be a stay to be hid with Him now, how much more to be hid *in* Him then! If when our life is hidden, how much more when it shall be revealed! For if our life be indeed hidden with Christ in God, who shall pluck us thence? Who shall be able to "pluck us out of the Father's Hand?[n]" Who repay the Ransom Which hath been paid for us, that He may give us up? "Who shall separate us from the love wherewith Christ loved us?[o]"

Oh seek we, then, ever to be hidden more in Him; hidden from the world, and from our own sins, and from the Accuser. Though Satan stand at our right hand, and our own consciences witness against us, and our manifold misdeeds terrify us, yet if we are, at the last, indeed in Him, we are safe. He will say unto us once more, "Behold, I have caused thine iniquity to pass from thee, and I will clothe thee with change of raiment.[p]" Seek we, then, day by day, to be more and more hid with Him here, that we may be found hid in Him at the end. Employ we every thing to this end. Year by year, if we look for them, events will come upon us which will sever us from the world, if we grasp it not wilfully. The world goes wrong, and we cannot amend it; it is wilful, and we cannot restrain it; it corrupts itself, and we cannot preserve it; all around is fleeting and shadowy; "nothing continueth in one stay." What we have, we lose; what we seek, disappoints; all "creation is subject to vanity," that we may seek Him Alone, Who

[n] S. John x. 29. [o] Rom. viii. 35, 39. [p] Zech. iii. 4.

Alone is not sought in vain, our Creator and our God. Blessed losses, disappointments, faintings of heart, perishing hopes, if not, like the poor world, we exchange one shadow for another, and forget our sorrow in some fresh source of sorrow.[q] More blessed they who learn betimes that the pure deep yearnings of childhood are not to be satisfied by ought they see, to whom "the depth saith,[r]" what ye seek "is not in me; and the sea saith, it is not with me. It cannot be gotten for gold, neither shall silver be weighed for the price thereof;" for nothing earthly can satisfy the soul which is Heavenly; all which passeth away is unreal, and what is unreal cannot satisfy, and all passeth away except the soul and God. Be we not like those who fret and are vexed, or stand amazed at the losses, or sorrows, or pains, which God sends them. But in each seek we for what end He sends it, die more to the world, from which He is detaching us; look we whereunto He is calling us; strive we to forget the world, its pomps, its vanities, its vain desires, its destructive pleasures, its bitter sorrows and more bitter joys, in Him. Contemplating Him and His Cross, each sorrow will but unloose one link of the chain which sin binds round us, and which withholds us from Him; each start or pang of pain will be but His welcome messenger; all shall we gladly share with Him, and in His Sufferings forget our own; glad to share here for our own sins' sakes, suffering, sickness, pain, bereavement, sorrow, loss, loneliness, rebuke, contempt,—knowing that we are safer thus than in health, reputation, abundance, gladness, enjoyment of all things,—glad to share all suffering, which He, for our sakes, suffered, so, for His Sufferings' sake, He give "us for a prey[s]" our own souls which we had justly forfeited, and the souls which we have loved.

Use we, then, rather the very things of time and sense, whereby others are drawn down to the world, to rise thereby to God. All has been hallowed since they have been used

[q] S. Aug Conf. iv. 8. p. 53. sqq. Oxf. Tr.
[r] Job xxviii. 14, 15.
[s] Jer. xlv. 5.

by Him Who, being God, for us became Man. Take we our food as from His Hand, Who is Himself the Food of Angels and our own; lay we down to rest, as longing, although unworthy, to rest in Him; rise we, as from death, to live anew the life in Him; gaze we not on any thing fair, but in it to behold Him; through what is seen, rise we to Him Who is Unseen; in a word, whatever we do, fast we or feast, labour or rest, speak we or be silent, learn or teach, behold what He has spread around us, or close our eyes, seek we, in all, to see Him, to live to Him, and He, Who is our Life, will pour His Hidden Life into our souls, will blind our eyes and stop our ears to this world's tinsel show and false unreal vanities, and open them to hear His Own Saving Cheering Voice, and to see the Image of His Beauty, and He will pierce us with the Sweetness of His Love, and lift up our hearts to long for Him, their Never-failing, Ever-satisfying Fulness.

So, while we hide ourselves in Him, shall this bad world lose its hold over us, and appear in our sight more what it is in His. So, while we gaze on His Glorious Countenance, shall we lose sight of this lower world, and its false glare shall be lost in His Brightness. So, shall evil spirits in vain howl around us, evil men in vain seduce us, an evil world in vain allure us, our own evil hearts in vain be ready to betray us; storm, rain, and floods, in vain shall beat upon our house, while we lie safely hid in that Rock Which was pierced for us, to pour forth that Precious Blood Which is our Ransom and our Life, and to be for us "an Hiding-place from the wind, and a Covert from the tempest, the Shadow of a Great Rock in a weary land.[t]"

God give us wisdom, day by day, to see the end of ourselves and of all things around us, and seeing all things as we shall see them when that end comes, gird us more stedfastly to walk in the way of His Commandments, that so, whether dried up or refreshed, honoured or despised, at rest or in weariness, lonely or supported, we may, in all things, seek Him only, our Refreshment, our Glory, our Strength,

[t] Is. xxxii. 2.

our Everlasting Rest; and ever seeking Him, may at length find Him, and be found in Him, and "ascend from the wilderness[u]" of this world, leaning on and supported by Him, Whom our soul hath loved.

[u] Cant. viii. 5.

SERMON XX.

INCREASED[a] COMMUNIONS.

EASTER.

1 Corinthians xi. 28.

"Let a man examine himself, and so let him eat of that Bread, and drink of that Cup."

All restoration to religious privileges involves perplexity and doubt, as well as thankfulness and joy. For restoration is not the natural order of God's Gifts. He formed His creatures very good. He re-created them still in His Own Image. The Church, "the Holy City, came down from God out of Heaven, prepared as a bride adorned for her Husband;[b]" her dowry complete, full of goodly Gifts and Heavenly Graces; one in the unity of "the Apostles' doctrine;" one in heart and soul; through the fervency of continual prayer, and self-forgetting charity which counted nought its own; fed daily with "the Living Bread Which came down from Heaven;" walking in the Light and Glory of God's Presence; filled with His satisfying Fulness; guided, and guarded, and hallowed by His Indwelling

[a] Preached to remove misgivings where Weekly Communion had lately been restored.

[b] Rev. xxi. 2.

Spirit.[c] Such, in His Holy Purpose, was she to remain, filling the earth with His Glory, of Which she was herself full; subduing and taking possession of the world in His Name, to Which she was herself subdued and Which she bore. Prophecy, except in the last days of Anti-Christ, knows nothing of dimness coming again over her light; her fine gold being tarnished; her peace broken within as well as without; her beautiful garments exchanged for the sackcloth of captivity and heaviness; herself sitting down again in the dust out of which she had been raised. And so, in her children individually. The course of God's appointment is that That Gift which, during our unconscious infancy, He, in Holy Baptism, placed within us, should grow with our growth, unfold with our unfolding faculties, take possession of our thoughts, longings, feelings, impulses, inform our actions, wrap round each developing energy, and turn each strife with sin into an occasion of victory. One onward course, amid and out of occasional stumblings and infirmities consistent with the state of Grace, is the path marked out for the Church to win the world, for the Christian to gain access to the Throne of God. Restoration implies fall and previous negligence; and falls, in proportion to their grievousness, imply some withdrawing of the Divine Light and Presence; and His diminished Presence, a proportionate misgiving and perplexity.

We need not then be amazed in ourselves, if we do find ourselves in perplexity, either when we, as we hope, are being restored individually, or as God's returning Favour to our Church, year by year, opens to us new and manifoldly increasing Gifts, which we before had not. "Can this be for me?" the penitent soul will often cry out, "me, who am not worthy of the Crumbs, which fall from His Table? me, who deserve only to be without? Am I thus to be brought within His Palace, and placed in His Presence? I, in the tattered garment for which I have exchanged His Robe of Righteousness, to sit down in His Marriage Feast? I, thus leprous, to be brought thus close to His Purity?

[c] Acts ii. 41—47; iv. 31.—35.

an outcast and a wanderer, to be bid to 'sup with Him, and He with me?[d]'" And in those happier cases, where the conscience has not been *freed* only, but has remained *free* from darker taints of sin, and bears witness that, amidst whatever of human infirmity, the heart's desire has been to cleave wholly to God, and be more singly His; still, on the opening of any new privilege, doubts will arise, and often in the very humblest and meetest hearts, whether they can safely avail themselves of it. Still the question comes back, "are these Gifts intended for such as I feel myself to be, or for those only of more devoted soul, who out of the distractions of the world can rise more freely to God? Is, or can, my life be any way proportioned to the Gift? Shall I persevere? My outward course of life must remain nearly the same: can my heart, amidst it, be inwardly more conformed to God, so that the Gifts for which I would long, if I dared, should be for my profit and to life, and not for my condemnation?"

Then, too, growth in Grace is mostly slow. We seem often, for a time, rather to have come to a fuller knowledge of our own miseries and infirmities, than to be conquering them. The Light, which by God's Mercy has streamed in, rather shews us the depth of our own darkness. The more we strive, the more we feel the weight which is against us. "Can it be?" people often think, "can the Food of Angels, the Fire of Love, the Coal from the Altar, be for hearts so cold, so lifeless, so feelingless?"

Thoughts such as these will naturally arise, when, (as in this place,) more frequent Communions, and Daily Prayers, have been restored. It is right that they should. They are a confession on the part of our fallen, although restored, nature, that it is an aweful thing to draw near to the Holiness of Almighty God. In some, such fears may be at once overborne by love. An ardent longing for the Love of God, or the humble fear of losing any Gift of His, may bear the soul beyond all other fear. Such dare approach, because they dare not turn away. They dare not willingly

[d] Rev. iii. 20.

part, for a time, with That Which makes them "one with Christ." And these too are right. We come to the Physician, not because we are whole, but because we are sick; we come to Him our Riches, because we are "poor and needy;" we come to the Fountain of Light, because we are blind; to "the Fountain opened for sin and for uncleanness," because we are defiled.

Still more commonly, there will be both hopes and fears; and people will be drawn both ways. Humility will both draw and withdraw them. Both may, in turns, seem to be presumption; to hold back, if God indeed inviteth us; or to press in, if we are not such as He would bid.

> "It is my Maker—*dare* I stay?
> My Saviour—*dare* I turn away?[e]"

What then? Are such fears, if overruled, to be wholly disregarded? Have they no office for us? Not so. All, fear and love, hope and awe, sense of sin and of helplessness, and longing to be other than we are; all should have one issue, to draw us more closely, yet more reverently to Him, in Whom Alone awe and fear can be hushed, helplessness be stayed, sin be blotted out, infirmities healed, the One Source and Aim of all holiness, and hope, and love. It is a pious prayer of a good man,[f] "Most Sweet Jesu, Whom Zacchæus received with joy into his house; and Whom the Centurion, out of reverence, did not dare to invite under his roof; Have Mercy upon me, that I may ever combine the feelings of them both, love and fear, whensoever I receive Thee into my house."

It is, then, at once a ground for earnest pausing and entering into ourselves, that any of us has these fears. For the fears are of God. It is an aweful thing to come into God's Presence. And each nearer approach to His Presence has, and ought to have, awe, and reverent fear. His Presence is aweful to Cherubim and Seraphim. Filled though they be with His Knowledge and His Love, they still veil their faces, as they hover around His Throne, and

[e] Christian Year, "Holy Communion."

[f] Paradise of the Christian Soul, P. v. on Devout Communion, Litany ii. p. 27.

sing their unceasing Hymn to the Ever-blessed Trinity, which we here faintly echo, "Holy, Holy, Holy, Lord God of Hosts.[g]" The blessed Angels are not pure in His sight, and so must stand with awe before Him, Who Alone is Holy, "how much less man, that is a worm? and the son of man, which is a worm?[h]" Ever since the fall, man has that within him, which may well make him hide himself, if he could, and which must make him come with shame and confusion of face before the Presence of his Maker. Even righteous men have stood in awe, when God revealed Himself most graciously and in Love. When the Voice of God came unto Moses, saying, "I am the God of thy fathers," he "trembled and durst not behold." He "hid his face, for he was afraid to look upon God.[i]" And Job saith, "I have heard of Thee by the hearing of the ear, but now mine eye seeth Thee, wherefore I abhor myself, and repent in dust and ashes." And the Patriarch Jacob, "Surely the Lord is in this place, and I knew it not. And he was afraid, and said, How dreadful is this place! This is none other but the House of God, and this is the Gate of Heaven.[k]" Daniel, the "man greatly beloved," retained no strength in him, "for my comeliness," he saith,[l] "was turned in me into corruption, and I retained no strength." And Habakkuk says,[m] "When I heard, my belly trembled; my lips quivered at the Voice; rottenness entered into my bones; and I trembled in myself, that I might rest in the Day of trouble." Such was a prophet's awe and fear. His very inmost self trembled; it was like the decay of the grave; he became a weight and a burden to himself; his "lips quivered" with the Message of God; that fearing in time, he might "rest in the Day of trouble," and "have boldness in the Day of Judgment.[n]"

Our Lord's first Words to His Apostles, after His Resurrection, were "Peace be unto you,[o]" yet neither these

[g] Is. vi. 2, 3.
[h] Job xxv. 5, 6.
[i] Acts vii. 31, 32; Ex. iii. 6.
[k] Gen. xxviii. 16, 17.
[l] Dan. x. 8.
[m] Hab. iii. 16.
[n] 1 S. John iv. 17.
[o] S. Luke xxiv. 36.

His Gracious Words nor Look hindered that they, terrified and affrighted, supposed that they had seen a "Spirit." The beloved Disciple, when in vision he saw Him Whom his soul loved, "fell at His Feet as dead.[p]" St. Paul speaks of that aweful Manifestation of God upon Mount Sinai, whereat "Moses said, I exceedingly fear and quake,[q]" and all terrors of nature were gathered together, the Mount burning with fire, and blackness, and darkness, and tempest, and the sound of the trumpet, exceeding loud, and waxing louder and louder, and the Voice of words," and "the thunders and lightnings," when "the whole Mount quaked greatly," as less aweful than our privileges. More aweful than the greatest terrors of God in the world of nature is, in the world of Grace, the awe of the Greatness of the Love of Jesus.

Much more is the nearness of God aweful to those, who are near Him in presence, but not in heart. The heaviest Judgments have ever fallen on those who have been brought nearest to Him. "I will not go up in the midst of thee," God saith, after the rebellion in the matter of the calf, "for thou art a stiff-necked people, lest I consume thee in the way.[r]" In Mercy God withdrew His more immediate Presence, lest their unholiness should turn it to their destruction. And they themselves said to Moses, "If we hear the Voice of the Lord our God any more, then we shall die; go thou near, and hear all that the Lord our God shall say, and we will hear it, and do it. And the Lord said, they have well said all that they have spoken.[s]" And of the Priests it was said, "Let the Priests, who come near unto the Lord, sanctify themselves, lest the Lord break forth upon them.[t]" And what is the whole history of God's earlier people, in the wilderness, under the judges, the kings, unto this day, but one deepening tale of heavy chastisement, "a roll written within and without, full of lamentation, and mourning, and woe;[u]" "plagues wonderful, and of long continuance," because they "feared" not

[p] Rev. i. 17. [q] Heb. 12. 21; Ex. xix. 6. [r] Ex. xxxiii. 3.
[s] Deut. v. 28. [t] Ex. xix. 22. [u] Ezek. ii. 9, 10.

"that Glorious and Fearful Name, the Lord their God?[x]" "What nation had God so nigh unto them, as the Lord their God was in all things that they called upon Him for?[y]" Yet so were all their sins too done in His very Presence; and He Who was nigh to save was in the midst of them to destroy. His Presence was in fire, a Light to them by night, a Guide to them by the way; yet when they sinned, a Fire also to destroy. "Our God is a Consuming Fire;[z]" "a Spirit of Burning[a]" to consume all evil in us; else would He be a Fire to consume us. "The Lord thy God in the midst of thee is Mighty,[b]" saith the Prophet, but He was "Mighty to save," or "to bring His Judgment to light."

And when He came nearest to His own, even in His Gracious Presence in the Flesh, then did their doom become more aweful. The greater the nearness to His Presence, the more aweful the peril. The All-merciful Redeemer pronounced a special woe on those "cities, wherein most of His Mighty Works had been done, because they repented not.[c]" "It shall be more tolerable, in the Day of Judgment, for Sodom and Gomorrha, than for thee."

And so of individuals, how utterly and how hopelessly did the curse fall upon Cain, and the profane Ham! How early the punishment on the mockery of Ishmael! How, for one act of profaneness, did Esau find "no place for repentance, though he sought it carefully with tears.[d]" How sudden and severe the punishment on the Sabbath-breaker, who gathered but a few sticks;[e] or upon the two sons of Aaron Nadab and Abihu, which God Himself interprets; "This it is that the Lord spake, saying, I will be Sanctified in them that come nigh Me, and before all the people I will be Glorified.[f]" How terrible the living destruction of Korah and his company, read to us by the Church[g] on the very day which closes the first week of our Easter joy, when

[x] Deut. xxviii. 58, 59. [y] Ib. iv. 7. [z] Ib. iv. 24; Heb. xii. 29.
[a] Is. iv. 4. [b] Zeph. iii. 5, 17. [c] Matt. x. 15.
[d] Heb. xii. 17. [e] Numb. xv. 32—36. [f] Lev. x. 3.
[g] Numb. xvi. First Lesson for the First Sunday after Easter.

our Easter Halleluias sound again, ere yet the words "Who, by His Death, hath destroyed death, and, by His Rising to Life again, hath restored to us Everlasting Life,[h]" have passed from our lips! They had all but the Priestly character, as our Lord "made us" all spiritually "Kings and Priests unto God and His Father.[i]" Yet how, as they sink down out of our sight, alive yet to death, are they pictures of the living death of the damned in Hell! How irrevocable the sentence pronounced long before on Hophni and Phinehas, or on Saul! How did Satan, after the Holy Supper, enter into Judas and take possession of him, so that even when he repented himself, he had no power left to repent truly. His sentence was pronounced, "Good were it for that man that he had never been born."

And so, of classes of men in this day, it is observed how the young of one profession much occupied with man's lifeless body, too commonly become wholly careless as to death, and callous and profane; how hardened and profligate too many of those become who are most conversant with death. Nay, aweful as it is for a Minister of God himself to say it, yet, as St. Paul said, "lest when I have preached to others, I myself should be a castaway,[k]" so it has become an almost received saying among holy men, that more Priests, perhaps, than of any other class will perish.

It is, then, no untrue fear which hesitates and stands in awe at any nearer approach to God. By nature, since Adam "hid himself in the trees of the garden,[l]" we should all hold back. We might well shrink from God's Presence, but that a mightier fear draws us to It. Nay, mostly, God has "compelled us to come in,[m]" lest while we hesitated, we, remaining without, should perish. He *has* brought us all very near to Him, even making us His children, members of His Son. We cannot henceforth, even if the faithless wish should arise in the heart of any, we cannot "be as the heathen.[n]" We have been brought near: and our only safety is remaining very nigh unto Him, under His very Shadow, yea

[h] Communion Service for Octave of Easter. [i] Rev. i. 6. [k] 1 Cor. ix. 27.
[l] Gen. iii. 8. [m] S. Luke xiv. 3. [n] Ezek. xx. 32.

drawing nigher and nigher to Him. Our only fear should be, lest we "draw nigh unto Him with our lips, while our hearts are far from Him;" lest we be near in bodily presence, but afar in spirit; our bodies in His Courts, our hearts in the world; our bodies touching the Holy Elements of His Body and Blood, our souls aliens from His Life, His Virtue, and the Might of His Sacraments.

It is a real fear, lest we injure ourselves in our every approach to God. We cannot have been more immediately in God's Presence, and be what we were before. Every time we kneel before Him in prayer, in our private devotions, in the service of the week, on the Lord's Day, every time we enter this Holy Place, much more on each occasion that we partake of His Body and Blood, we become other than we were before. We rise up different from what we knelt down. As we were there, careless or earnest; reverent or irreverent; fixed in heart even amid distraction, or giving ourselves to lukewarmness; penitent or impenitent; we arose with a blessing, or the further from God and the more "nigh unto cursing.[o]" We cannot escape. People only increase their own difficulty by infrequency. The more infrequent people's devotions, the more irreverent are they. For their very infrequency is an irreverence, and deprives them of God's Blessing. If we are cleansing our hearts diligently, He will make the mansion of our souls fit for His reception at all times. If men will not part with their sins, they are never fit for His Presence, here or in Heaven.

It is not then to keep us back from approaching to God that these fears are placed within us. "We are not come unto the mountain which might be touched, and which burned with fire,[p]" and of which God charged, "set bounds about the mount and sanctify it; charge the people lest they break through unto the Lord to gaze, and many of them perish.[q]" Our privilege, although on that account the more aweful, is that we *must* draw near, *lest* we perish. God putteth not these fears into the heart of any, to keep them

[o] Heb. vi. 8. [p] Ib. xii. 18. [q] Ex. xix. 31.

ST. ALBERT'S COLLEGE LIBRARY

away from Him, our True Life; but that we may so approach Him, that we "may have Life, and have it more abundantly.[r]" He gives us fear before we approach Him, that, approaching Him "in reverence and Godly Fear," we may be before Him without fear; since when we fear, He will say to us, "Fear not."

Of ourselves, we have indeed all cause to fear. "Woe is me!" saith the Prophet Isaiah,[s] "for I am undone; because I am a man of unclean lips, and I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips; for mine eyes have seen the King, the Lord of Hosts." And we look not only to behold Him, but to receive Him; not to receive Him only, but that He should dwell in us; our spirit united with His Spirit; our bodies hallowed by His Presence, His dwelling-place; we ourselves "members of His Body, of His Flesh, and of His Bones.[t]" Well, then, might we shrink back with awe, and fear, and amazement at ourselves, that we, such as too many of us know ourselves to be, or to have been, should receive Him in the ruined and desolate mansion of our souls. Well might we fear to think of His dwelling there, amid what company! of thoughts of self, or worldliness, or pride, or vanity, or fretfulness, or all the leprous and defiled brood, entailed by former sin. Well might we fear, but that He will be present, not as a Judge, but as a Redeemer; not to condemn, but to save; not to visit our offences, but to cleanse us from them. He cometh to us, Himself our Physician to heal; a Fountain to cleanse; Light in our blindness; Riches in our poverty; a Robe to hide our nakedness and shame; Himself Forgiveness, and Reconciliation, and Sanctification, and Redemption; Himself the Salvation our eyes wait for; Himself undefiled by our pollutions, and, (as once when with us in the Flesh,) cleansing them by His Touch; not partaking of our decay, but "restoring our waste places,[u]" that He may dwell there, and by Indwelling, restore them.

We need then have no fear, save that we should lose our fear. For where there is fear, there is watchfulness, and

[r] S. John x. 10. [s] Is. vi. 5. [t] Eph. v. 30. [u] Is. lviii. 12.

humble approach, and earnest caution; and where these are, there is God's Favour, Who "despiseth not a broken and contrite heart." And this fear and reverent awe will, if we be watchful, increase with increasing devotion and more frequent Communions. For the more any know God, the more they must stand in awe of Him. The nearer and more habitually any approach Him, the more will He be Present with them, with His Gifts, as well of Love as of "Holy Fear."

Yet although more frequent Communions and more frequent prayer, would, rightly used, and through the Grace of God, produce increased reverence and devotion, and all other fruits of God's Presence and Indwelling Spirit, it is not to be concealed that, unless the heart be firmly fixed and bent on God, there is risk in both, lest "what should have been for our wealth, be unto us an occasion of falling." All through life we have reason to fear, lest we lose our first fervour, and our service become languid and formal. The danger is not more imminent on more frequent service. It attends all. At first, we are mostly awed from without. However little any may know of the reality of God's Presence in this House of Prayer, or that our Lord is indeed in the midst of us, more truly and fully present than we ourselves are, or however poor the thoughts of the best must be of the Ineffable Mystery of the True Presence of His Body and Blood in the Holy Eucharist, it must be some ground of awe, (which all feel,) that this is indeed the House of God, that That is the Sacrament of His Body and Blood. If the whole soul becomes, by God's Transforming Grace, more reverent, this reverence too will deepen with increased Communions and deepening years. And yet we know too well, this is not mostly so. Imperfect as are the prayers of childhood, too many must look back with a sorrowful yearning even to their childish prayers, ere distraction had become a habit, and unbidden thoughts carried away their uncontrolled minds, and the captive mind returns more slowly to recollection of itself and of God, and the very words of prayer lead it off to other thoughts than

those of prayer and of God. The very Ministers at God's Altar, little as they can, or wish to, read the heart, cannot but see that there is too often more reverence and devotion among the younger than among the elder of their flock. The first awe from without, unless it deepen into habitual reverence, wears off, and leaves the very surface cold and irreverent.

Nor dare we withhold the truth, that there is an especial danger of unworthy partaking of the Holy Eucharist. Because the full sin and profaneness in the Corinthian Church, and with it their full punishment, do not take place now, we are not therefore secure against some shade of both. *Their* sin was irreverence, whereby they failed to "discern the Lord's Body;" their punishment, that they "ate and drank damnation to themselves." But it is of the very nature of God's Word, that it applies, in endless degrees, to all our varied states; so that we cannot say, that because it reaches us not in its extremest sentence, therefore we wholly escape its condemnation. As the Commandments forbid not only the extremest sins of murder, and adultery, and theft, and covetousness, but each slightest shade of an angry, or impure, or covetous thought, so the failure to "discern the Lord's Body[x]" includes not only open profaneness and the sin of Judas, but every shade of irreverence and negligence, either in preparing to receive It, or of ourselves, when we have received It. And as the offence, so also is the degree of the punishment. Short of that extremest penalty, people even now "meet together, not for the better, but for the worse." Not in the most frequent Communions only or chiefly, but still more often among the rarer Communicants, there have been ever those who, coming without "the Wedding Garment," come to the hurt of their souls. They are ever such as fear it not. In that sad past when the soul was pursuing a wrong end, parting with God Whom she hoped not to part with, because she would not part with vanities which she knew not how fast she held, her bitterest sorrow, when awakened, has often been even rare yet profaned Communions.

[x] 1 Cor. xi. 29.

Our safety is not in keeping away from our Redeemer, but in drawing near more lowlily, and guarding ourselves more watchfully. *They* incur the risk of offending by not "discerning the Lord's Body" beforehand, who remit in their diligence in preparing their hearts, examine themselves lightly, are not careful to know what evil there is in them, or how it is to be healed, or look for no great benefit, not on account of their own unworthiness, but as though, if worthy, Heaven were not open to them to partake. *They* risk at the time, who labour not to impress their minds with the awefulness of the service whereat they present themselves; who gather not up their minds with all their power for this one thought, Whom they are to receive, and what for themselves or for others they need, and seek not that their unstayedness should be fixed by Him. *They* risk afterwards, who think that when their thanksgiving is finished, and they have been dismissed with the Blessing, their duties are ended, and return to their homes to be the same as before, forgetting, or not carefully cherishing, "what great things God hath done for them;" Who hath come to them; with Whom, if they were found worthy, they were made one, and He with them; Whom they bear about them: who watch not over themselves, lest they defile by any taint of sin what God has so hallowed; who having been strengthened, waste the Talent they have received, and are content to walk as feebly and irresolutely as before; who having been with their Lord, seek not to remain with Him, but enter with as much eagerness as before into the distractions of the things of sense.

Increased Communions do require increased watchfulness, that we "receive not the Grace of God in vain." To what end to seek to be strengthened, if we use not the strength given? to come oftener near our Lord, if not to remain nearer to Him? to seek more frequent cleansing, if not to remain more cleansed? to pray Him again and again to come under our roof, if not to entertain Him reverently, press Him to "abide with us," live in and on His Presence, be with Him, wherever we are, love Him with a more whole

heart, Who as He once gave Himself for us, so now so often giveth Himself to us.

Yet be we not dismayed, as though these things were too great for us. We see not at the time what great things God is doing for us. We need not fear, that He will not do for us, more than we dare ask or think. Even amid the extremest sin of the Corinthians, St. Paul gives no other rule than, "let a man examine himself, and so let him eat of that Bread and drink of that Cup." And then Communion was daily! Come we with true, and honest, and humble hearts; and what in us is lacking, He Who gave us what we have, will supply. Be we in earnest with ourselves, and He, our Compassionate Saviour, will have pity upon our infirmities. It is He Who calleth us. Arise we and come to Him. He putteth alike into our hearts, our longings, and our fears; our longings, more and more, week by week, to possess Himself, be made one with Him; our fears, lest, coming unprepared, we miss the blessing we long for, and entail loss on ourselves. By both He is drawing us to Himself, and knitting us more closely to Him, making us such in whom He can dwell, and dwelling in those whom He has prepared.

It may be that, in the past times of our negligence, He withdrew the Communions from us, and caused them to be infrequent, lest we should injure ourselves. Now He is every where calling men to be His, and those who are His, to be more wholly His. He is calling to new degrees of devotedness, devotion, love; to higher, more self-denying, self-subduing service. He is setting a higher measure of Grace before us, not of mere amiable, benevolent, kindly characters, fulfilling with ease or integrity the ordinary duties of life, and promoting works of charity or religion, as occasion offers. He is teaching us to make Him, in all things, our End; to live the hidden life in Him; in all things to behold Him; to count all things loss or gain, as they fix our hearts on Him or divide them with Him; to desire nothing in comparison with Him; nothing, if need be, but Him; to make His Cross our badge, our glory, and our

stay; His Wounds, our meat and drink; His Will, our only will; His Passion, our defence; His Death, our life; His Resurrection, the Source of our life, our one endless and unfailing Hope. And with these Calls He is vouchsafing to us new strength and life, to carry us, by His Indwelling, All-empowering Might, to the End of our being, our hopes, our fears, our sufferings, our disappointments, the faintnesses of our heart, the fadings of earth's brightest joys, even to the Mount of God, there not to hear of Him only "with the hearing of the ear,[y]" in "the still small Voice," but, with Unveiled Face, for ever to behold, for ever adore, for ever love, Himself.

Faint we not that we cannot realise all this at once. He ever leadeth His by "paths that we know not.[z]" Only now that He calleth us, follow we Him. "Commit" we "our ways unto Him." Take we the first step He biddeth us, and He will go before us, and we shall "hear His Voice and follow Him." By these increased Gifts, He calleth you to increased, more watchful service, more devoted love, brighter rewards in bliss.

Fear not, lest ye should not be able to persevere. The Gift we seek, if we seek It earnestly, will Itself bind us fast with the sure cords of love, and uplift our hearts, and knit them unto Him. It is "Life." What then should frequent Communion be, but manifold, multiplied Life? Fear we not that His Bounty is exhaustible, His Fulness cloying, His Love bounded. It was only to faithless hearts that the Manna seemed "light bread.[a]" We come to Him, "in Whom are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge," in Whom "dwelleth all the Fulness of the Godhead," Whose "Mercies fail not, but are new every morning.[b]" Where should be the limits of His Love, Who is Infinite? or of His Mercy to us, Who, being God, for our sakes became as we, that we might be as Himself? Have His Mercies been restrained towards us even by our unfaithfulness? and since His Mercy has thus overflowed towards us,

[y] Job. xlii. 5.
[z] Is. xlii. 16.
[a] Num. xxii. 5.
[b] Lam. iii. 22, 23.

amid negligence and sin, how much more when with penitent hearts, we desire to be filled with His Restoring Love! No! His Communication of His Love is bounded only by our capacities, and our capacities by our faithful longings. He is "the Bread of Life[c]" to all, as He upholdeth all in life. Yet as the life of the Archangel is higher than the life of the worm, although both are upheld in life by Him, so has He, in the stores of His Sacramental Grace, a Fulness of Life and Love, an Ineffable Presence, "Torrents of pleasure," a soul-subduing aweful Nearness, and transporting Union, as different from that, which He bestows at earlier stages, as the Archangel's life from that of us poor defiled worms of earth.

Force not yourselves, yet fear not. If He draw us to this Heavenly Feast, let us follow Him. If He have not yet drawn us, pray we Him that He draw us, and make it Health and Safety to our souls.

The weekly Union with your Lord will become the very Centre, as it is the Fulness of your life. Your life will be spent either in thankfulness for the past, or longing for His coming Gift. And since the more we ask, the more He giveth, Who is "always more ready to give than we to pray," such practices as these have been found useful.

1. While you desire that He, the Source of all Grace and Love, should dwell in your soul, so especially ask at each Communion, that He would give you, with Himself, some special Grace, which you feel you most need, as opposed to "the sin which doth most easily beset you.[d]" Pray Him not only for love, or humility, or meekness, (and so as to every other grace,) but that He Himself would, by Himself, conform you to Him. For His Graces are His Own Gifts, through His In-dwelling by His Spirit. Thus, pray that you may be humble as He was "Meek and Lowly of heart;" fervent, as He prayed earnestly, and with His Bloody Sweat for us, in the garden; meek, as He was "led as a lamb to the slaughter," and prayed for His torturers then. And since the soul longs more earnestly, when it is

[c] S. John vi. 35. [d] Heb. xii. 1.

gathered around one object, it is often best to pray for some one Grace. Desire this with your whole heart. So you will come to Holy Communion, not only with the general hope of receiving Grace and strength, but with the strong desire to be strengthened in this one Grace, wherein ye are now weakest. With this prayer, offer, on your part, by His Grace, to cut off this or that way of acting, wherein your infirmity shews itself, to do firmly this or that which it is now hard to do. Then examine thyself carefully, in the week following, on this one point. Persevere in this, make this thy special examination before each Communion, and by the Grace of God you will gain much, both in earnestness of purpose, and in growth in Grace.

2. Since you desire that your Lord should "dwell in your heart," forget Him not, when ye have received Him. Collect yourself, from time to time, during the day, in His Presence; commune with Him. Pray Him, "Abide with me, Lord." Pray Him to guard thee, within and without, against all which may offend Him, to deepen in thee whatever Grace thou hast asked for. Watch jealously over every thought and member. Remember that your Lord dwelleth in you, and speak, act, and think, as in His Presence. Watch over all the inlets of your senses. Let not the eyes, which He has enlightened, wander after sights of vanity; nor the ears, which He has unstopped, be filled with sounds of this world, so that they hear not His still Voice; nor the taste, which has tasted Heavenly Food, be over-anxious about "the things which perish in the using;" nor the tongue, which (as was said of old,) has been "reddened[e] with the Blood of the Lord," speak idle, or vain, or detracting or unloving words; nor the mind, which has been gathered in one in Him, be scattered amid the distractions of this world. We have offered up "ourselves, our souls and bodies," on the Altar of His Cross, as "a reasonable, holy, and living Sacrifice" unto God, to be united with His Atoning Sacrifice, and consumed by the Fire of His Love; see we that a subtle love of the world awake not again in us.

[e] See note l to the Sermon, "The Holy Eucharist, a Comfort to the Penitent." p. 23.

3. Learn, at least gradually, "Spiritual Communion" on other days, when thou mayest not receive Him in His Sacrament. All prayer calls Him into the soul. "When I call upon my God," exclaims a Father,[f] in reverent awe, "I call Him into myself." "Thou callest upon God, when thou callest God into thee. Thou invitest Him in a manner into the mansion of thy heart." But it is a more solemn act consciously to call our Lord into ourselves. For how can we call Him into a heart which has that within it which must offend His Holy Eyes? Yet we call Him Who cannot be defiled, to enter in and cleanse it. We call Him, on Whom this day we call, that "our sinful bodies may be made clean by His Body, and our souls washed through His most Precious Blood;[g]" to abide and "cleanse more and more from our wickedness" us whom He has so cleansed. So shall thy sense of thy need of His Presence, and thy longing be increased: and thou shalt hunger more for that Righteousness, for which thou daily longest. His Presence in thy soul shall become thy "Daily Bread;" and daily "hungering," thou shalt be daily "filled." He shall "enlarge the narrow mansion of thy soul, that He may enter in.[h]" Communions in spirit detain Jesus in the soul which He hath visited, and prepare the soul to long for His fuller Presence.

4. For due preparation we need not fear that lawful occupations will not leave us time. Daily Communion was long the privilege of all Christians; still longer of our Western Churches. And yet St. Paul's command, "Let a man examine himself," was obeyed then. Be we only in earnest, or long to be so, and "The Lord will provide.[i]" He can make our whole life one preparation for His Coming to us, as each day should be for His Final Coming. As the light of day is shed around us, and we are conscious of its presence, and gladdened by it, and yet our eyes behold only the more distinctly all upon which it falls, so may the Sun of our souls be ever present to them, and we rejoice in

[f] S. Aug. Conf. i. 2. In Ps. xxx. En. iv. § 4. [Ps. xxxi. p. 265. Oxf. Tr. at length.]
[g] Service for Holy Communion.
[h] S. Aug. Conf. i. 6.
[i] Gen. xxii. 8, 14.

His Presence, and yet see and do our several duties, not only unhindered by our thoughts of God, but more distinctly, and with readier mind and will. Seek we, amid our daily duties or refreshments, to win our thoughts more to Him, to consecrate to Him the several portions of the day and our larger courses of action, and, as we learn how, each several action. And for more immediate preparation, frequent Communicants, living, as they should, in habitual watchfulness, as they will have a shorter period to review, so having learnt more watchful ways, their souls will lie more open to themselves, and they will learn with less of effort, to exercise more readily a closer search. Their accounts with themselves will be in better order, and so reviewed more easily. Then also win we, if we can, some time for collectedness and retirement, as by earlier rising, or when we may, by stillness and holier reading on the preceding evening, or in its later hours. Above all, do not neglect preparation or thanksgiving on any day, because thou canst not use all the prayers thou wouldest. God does not look on the length of the prayers, but on the desire of the heart.[k] He Who accepts the "cup of cold water given to a disciple in His Name," from those who have no larger gift to offer, will accept brief prayers darted up, out of the midst even of occupation, to Him. He Who accepted "the two mites," looks not at the amount of the gift, but at the store out of which it is given, and the faith and love which offer it. "Lord, have mercy!" from the lips of a drowning man, has been a whole volume of prayer. "I have sinned against the Lord,[l]" restored David from his deep fall, to be again "the man after God's Own Heart." "Lord, cleanse me," may gather into one cry of penitence the miseries of a whole life. "O Good Jesu, give me a burning love for Thee," may bring into one ardent longing the love of years. "O Good Jesu, prepare my heart for Thyself," often said, may blend in one,

[k] "Longing desire prayeth always, though the tongue be silent. If thou art ever longing, thou art ever praying. When stayeth prayer? When desire groweth cold." —S. Aug. on the N. T. Serm. xxx. [80 Ben.] § 7. p. 242. Oxf. Tr. see also on Ps. xxxvii. § 14.

[l] 2 Sam. xii. 13.

humility, penitence, faith, hope, earnest longing, love. Of time too, it may be said, "If thou hast much, give plenteously; if thou hast little, do thy diligence gladly to give of that little: for so gatherest thou thyself a good reward in the Day of necessity.[m]" It has been advised, when Communion is weekly, to make the three first days of the week, thanksgiving; the three last, preparation: or thanksgiving and preparation may be blended into one. For we ask for His Blessed Presence, not as though we had It not; we thank Him for His Gift, not as though we needed not that It be renewed.

5. Joy in our Lord, implies sorrow for what displeases Him; the Remembrance of His Death, suffering and reverent sympathy with Him; the Feast on "the Lamb Who was slain,[n]" must be eaten with the "bitter herbs" of repentance for our own sins; before the renewal of Easter-Day, must be the renewed memory of the Passion. A weekly Feast should be entered upon through the lowly portal of a weekly Fast. Use then, at least some self-denial, as ye may bear it, on the weekly Commemoration of His Passion; and in sight of His Sufferings, seek we to obtain shame, and compunction of heart, and true penitence for our own sins.

Do we this with faithful hearts, and He Who seeth in secret, will "meet us in the way of righteousness,[o]" and guide our steps, and reward openly the work, "which He hath wrought in us." He will make each Lord's Day an Easter-Day to us, in which our Risen Lord will appear to us, "talk to us by the way," "open our hearts," and into our opened hearts pour in His Life, and Presence, and Love. He will anew cleanse the defilements which we bewail; fill up the scars our sins have left; repair the decays, which in our forgetfulness or wilfulness we contracted; heal[p] our infirmities, that in Mercy and Loving-kindness He may crown us. He will make each Lord's Day a herald of that glorious Easter-Morn, when "shadows shall flee away,[q]" and night, and time, and sin, and infirmity, and death shall be no more;

[m] Tob. iv. See Service for Holy Communion.
[n] Rev. v. 12.; Ex. xii. 8.
[o] Is. lxiv. 5.
[p] Ps. ciii. 3. 4.
[q] Cant ii. 15.

when all who are His, shall for ever meet in His Presence, and joy before Him.

Oh what will that Blessed Morn be, when, if "found in Him," we shall not behold Him, as now, afar off, but "face to Face," "in His Beauty;[r]" when He Who has tended us all our lives long, called us to His Feet, made us members of His Body, Who bore our sins upon the Cross, bore so long time with our frailties, and wilfulness, and sins, interceded for us, fed us with His Own Body, washed us with His Own Blood, was Himself our hidden Life,—He, our Redeemer, Mediator, Who wept for our sins, and gave us tears to weep our own, Who became Man for our salvation, that He might make us gods,[s]—shall appear to us openly, and call to His Side those who would at last be kept by Him and whom He has kept! Oh! how in the Dawn of that Ineffable Brightness, shall we rejoice, if, when in this life He called us to a nearer Communion with Him, and a more devoted service, and stricter trying of our ways, and more exact obedience, we hearkened to His Call! And yet that Dawn shall be but the opening of an Endless Bliss, which we then shall not yet know; Bliss, which "eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither hath entered into the heart of man;" "the Joy of our Lord," the Joy which our Redeeming Lord and God hath in the Unity of the Eternal Godhead, and into which the Joy of our own Lord, His redeemed, shall enter.

O blessed Jesu! give us Grace so to approach Thee here "with reverence and godly fear," that we in that Day may behold Thee without fear. Cleanse our hearts to receive Thee, and so dwell in us whom Thou hast cleansed. So pour Thy Love into our hearts, that we may have boldness in the Day of Judgment. May He join us more closely to His Side, that we be never parted from It, but these glimpses of Heaven and unseen Union with Him, be the foretaste and earnest of that Unspeakable Feast, when we, who hunger now, shall be wholly filled, because we shall wholly love.

[r] Is. xxxiii. 17.

[s] See above, p. 233, note l. See also Nouet's Life of Christ in Glory, p. 385, n. 2.

SERMON XXI.

HEAVEN THE CHRISTIAN'S HOME.

ASCENSION-DAY.

PHILIPPIANS III. 20.

"Our conversation is in Heaven; from whence also we look for the Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ."

HEAVEN is the very mystery of this Day's Festival. We have not only, with St. John the Baptist, seen the Heavens open, and the Spirit descending from Heaven and lighting upon our Incarnate Lord: we have not only had His Promise fulfilled, "Thou shalt see greater things than these, verily, verily, I say unto you, hereafter ye shall see Heaven open, and the Angels of God ascending and descending upon the Son of Man.[a]" We have seen Heaven part, not only for Gifts to be received by Him for us, and the union between Heaven and earth which sin had broken, restored, but we have seen Him, our Head, clothed with our flesh, with ourselves, One God with the Father, One Man with us, received up, as Man, into Heaven and above the Heavens, at the Right Hand of God. What then have we any more to do with earth, or the things of earth, its cares or its sorrows, its pleasures or its vanities, its emptiness or its fulness, whose Head is in Heaven? Where else should the

[a] S. John i. 51.

members be! The Redeemer is there; where else the redeemed? Henceforth the blue sky tells us not only of the Deep, Boundless, All-Enfolding Love of God, or the stars, that they were made by our Father's Hand, or the sun, of that Sun "from Whose Heat nothing is hidden;[b]" nor doth "He cover Himself with a cloud that our prayers should not pass through;[c] but the sky tells us how "the Kingdom of Heaven has been opened to all believers;" and sun and stars how, above them both, He, "The Lord God Omnipotent, reigneth;" He to Whom "all Power is given in Heaven and in earth," the Son of God yet the Son of Man! Clouds are no longer darkness around Him, but the Throne which received Him, when the Son of Man was "received" indeed "out of our sight," but "came with the clouds of Heaven, and came near to the Ancient of Days,[d] and there was given Him "Dominion, and Glory, and a Kingdom, that all people, nations, and languages, should serve Him;" and we too were given Him to be blessed in His service, and if we serve Him, to "reign with Him.[e]" Well might the Apostle say, "God, Who is rich in Mercy, for His great Love wherewith He Loved us, when we were dead in trespasses and sins, hath quickened us together with Christ, and hath raised us up together, and made us sit together in Heavenly Places in Christ Jesus.[f]" For are we not in a manner already in Heaven, when He, our Head, our King, our Shepherd, our Redeemer, is there, to speak reverently, for this very end, to prepare a place for us? "I go," He said, "to prepare a place for you,[g]" to intercede for us, "Who sitteth at the Right Hand of God, Who also maketh intercession for us;[h]" "Who is entered into Heaven Itself, now to appear in the Presence of God for us;[i]" yea, more boldly yet, the Apostle says, "Who ever liveth to make Intercession for us;[k]" as though *the* end of His Going, Sitting, His Very Life in Glory, were, not to receive the Worship of the Heavenly Host, and be obeyed by "things

[b] Ps. xix. 6.
[c] Lam. iii. 44.
[d] Dan. vii. 13, 14.
[e] 2 Tim. ii. 12.; Rev. xx. 6.
[f] Eph. ii. 4—6.
[g] S. John xiv. 2.
[h] Rom. viii. 32.
[i] Heb. ix. 24.
[k] Ib. vii. 25.

in Heaven, and earth, and under the earth,[l]" but to complete what He had begun for us, that "where He is, there may His servants be.[m]" And where is He? where is our life? where shall we be, if we be His, and have His Life? "Your life is hid with Christ in God.[n]" In the Ineffable Fulness of the Glory and Love of God.

"Our conversation is in Heaven." Many are the meanings of this word, and every way the Apostle says we are in Heaven. For the word,[o] in the language in which God wrote it, means the city or state to which we belong, or citizenship, or the order and rules of a state by which it is governed, or the way of life of the citizens, "our conversation," and in all these ways he places us in Heaven. He does not say only, our faith, our hopes, our expectation, the Object of our longing, is in Heaven; he speaks not of what is to be, but of what is; "our conversation *is* in Heaven." Again, he does not say "it ought to be," "let it be," "let our deeds and words, and thoughts, aim thitherward, thither aspire, thither be directed;" he does not even say, "we live on earth a holy and Heavenly life, a life after the manner of the Blessed Angels," nor, "thither we aim, thither stretch forward, thither we hope to attain to Christ, Who hath prepared the way for us, and is Himself the Way," nor does he say, "we are, *as it were*, citizens of Heaven, living under Heavenly rule, Heavenly laws, all whereof breatheth of Heaven," nor even, "we are in the Kingdom of Heaven, a Heaven upon earth," as the Apostle saw "the Holy City,[p]" the Church, "the Heavenly Jerusalem," come down from God out of Heaven. All this is true of God's chosen ones; all, through God's Grace, might be true of us; but here he speaketh of no hope of things to come, no aim, no likeness, no blessedness on earth; but of that which *is;* "our conversation is," (not *of*, nor *like*, nor *tending to*,) but "*in* heaven."

Let us think of the words awhile in these different ways. "Our conversation," city or citizenship, in a word, our

[l] Phil. ii. 10. [m] S. John xii. 26. [n] Col. iii. 3.
[o] πολίτευμα. [p] Rev. xxi. 2.

home "is in heaven." Yet so it might be, so, in one sense, it is, though we were away from home. For, as the Apostle says, "While we are present in the body, we are absent from the Lord.[q]" Yet it is not altogether an absent home of which the Apostle speaks. He does not say, our home is far away, as that to which we have no access, as our home might be beyond the seas, or the vast stormy ocean of this world. He speaks not of our home as something separate from us, not as something in space in which we might be and are not, but as something belonging to us, and to which we belong, to which of right, (not our own surely, but as by Christ Jesus purchased for us,) and in fact we belong. For the Temple of God, the Church, is not made with hands, not a material building, as this wherein we worship God, so that if it is here, it cannot be there, if in Heaven, not on earth. One Church we know it is, of all who are, or have been, or shall be, in Christ Jesus, all, wherever they are, in Heaven or in earth, all, men and Angels, knit in one in Him. And in this we are fellow-citizens; "strangers and pilgrims" on earth, in the body, because our affections are not here; "*not* strangers[r] and foreigners, but fellow-citizens of the saints, and of the household of God," living with and under God, guarded, fed, maintained by Him; yea, having a holy boldness, and familiar reverent intercourse with Him, as members of His family, His great household. And this perhaps will contain in one all the meanings of this word, that we are inhabitants, citizens, of Heaven, not of earth. To earth we belong as to these poor bodies, which shall return to the earth, because not as yet hath Christ come to "conform our vile bodies unto His Glorious Body, according to the mighty working whereby He shall subdue all things unto Himself.[s]" "He hath raised us up together, and made us sit together with Him,[t]" but as yet not in body but in soul. But in soul and spirit, he would say, we are there already. There our life centres, there we live; to it we belong. *There*

[q] 2 Cor. v. 6.
[r] Heb. xi. 13.; 1 S. Pet. i. 11.; Eph. ii. 19.
[s] Phil. iii. 21.
[t] Eph. ii. 6.

are your goods, and treasures; your rights, your possessions, your kindred, your friends, your dwelling-place. There "the gates stand open day and night,[u]" and ye may go up and down at will. There the martyrs, when bound, walked freely,[x] when in darkness were in great light; there they walked freely, like Enoch or Abraham, to and fro,[y] with, or before the Face of, God. There the spirit might take what it willed, have what it asked for. There it has all the freedom of a son in his father's house, an heir amid his inheritance. For the Great Father saith to His son, "Son, Thou art ever with Me, and all that I have is thine;[z]" and He Who purchased it all for us, and in Whom, if indeed such, we are sons, saith, as now, "Whatsoever ye shall ask the Father in My Name, He will give it you. Ask, and ye shall receive, that your joy may be full.[a]" There is our All, for there is our God.

But how then, if on earth, as we know we are, and, as we too sorely know also, "the corruptible body presseth down the spirit,[b]" is our citizenship, our dwelling-place, yea we ourselves, in Heaven too, as He saith, "hath made us to sit together in Heavenly places in Christ?"

First, by the special Mystery of this Day; because our Lord is there. This is a deep, intense Mystery, the Mystery of God made Man, and Man made God; God in Man, and Man in God. It is not by a figure only, that our Blessed Lord is called our Head, and we His members. He is not so called, as we might speak of the head of a family, one without it, although governing and protecting it; but

[u] Is. lx. 11.; Rev. xxi. 25.

[x] "Away with the name of a prison! Let us call it a retirement. Though the body be shut up, though the flesh be confined, all is open to the spirit. Roam freely, thou spirit! Walk to and fro, thou spirit; not setting before thee shady walks or long cloisters; but that *way* which leadeth unto God. As often as thou shalt walk herein in the spirit, so oft shalt thou not be in prison. The leg suffereth nothing in the stocks, while the mind is in Heaven. The mind carrieth about with it the whole man, and removeth him whither it listeth." Tert. ad Mart. c. 2. p. 153, Oxf. Tr.

[y] הִתְהַלֵּךְ אֶת Gen. v. 22, 24; vi. 9; לִפְנֵי ib. xvii. 1; xxiv. 40; xlviii. 15; 1 Sam. ii. 30; 2 Kings xx. 3; Ps. cxvi. 9.

[z] S. Luke xv. 31 [a] S. John xvi. 24. [b] Wisd. ix. 15.

as the Head of the Body, to Whom, not in any carnal corporeal way, yet still really it belongs, and is a Part of Him. "No one," saith a Father,[c] "feareth the Lord, save he who is in the members of That One Man; and there are many men, and there is One Man, for there are many Christians and One Christ. Christians themselves together with their Head, Which hath ascended into Heaven, is One Christ. He is not One and we many, but we too, being many, are One Thing (Unum) in Him being One. There is then One Man Christ, Head and Body. What is His Body? His Church, the Apostle saith, 'for we are members of His Body,[d]' and 'Now are the Body, and members of Christ.[e]' In His Body, then, we are One Man.[f]" "See then by what grace ye belong to God, that *He* willed to be One with us, Who is One with The Father. How One with the Father? 'I and the Father are One.' How One with us? 'He saith not, And to seeds, as of many, but as of one, unto thy Seed, Which is Christ.' But one will say, 'If Christ be Abraham's seed, are we so too?' Remember that Christ is 'Abraham's Seed;' and thereby, if we too are 'Abraham's Seed,[g]' then we too are Christ." (Christus.)

And so we are in Heaven in Him, He on earth in us. For as He says, "Abide in Me, and I in you," and Holy Scripture so very often[h] says, "We are *in* Christ Jesus," so He says also of His persecuted Members, that He is persecuted in them; "Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou Me?" of His poor, hungry, thirsty, outcast, sick, imprisoned members, "Ye gave Me meat; ye gave Me drink; ye took Me in; ye clothed Me; ye came unto Me." And so since He is in Heaven, we, if we are in Him, are in Heaven too. "He," saith the Apostle, "has made us sit together with Christ in Heavenly places," placed as on His Throne, "for since," says a father[i], "the Head sitteth, the body sitteth also, as he addeth, 'in Christ Jesus.'" Well

[c] S. Aug. in Ps. cxxvii. § 3. [d] Eph. v. 30. [e] 1 Cor. xii. 27.
[f] Id. in Ps. 142. § 3. [g] Gal. iii. 29.
[h] See above page 248, and Scriptural views of Holy Baptism, pp. 113—115, ed. 3. Tracts for the Times.
[i] S. Chrys. on Eph. ii. 6. pp. 139, 140, Oxf. Tr.

may the same father exclaim, "Oh honour above all honour, beyond which there is none other. This then he saith, that even we shall sit there. Truly this is surpassing riches, truly surpassing is the greatness of His Power, to make us sit down with Christ. Yea, hadst thou ten thousand souls, wouldest thou not lose them for His sake? Yea, hadst thou to enter the flames, oughtest thou not readily to endure it? And He too Himself saith again, 'I will that where I am, there also My servant be.' Why surely had ye to be cut to pieces every day, ought ye not, for the sake of these Promises cheerfully to embrace it? Think, where He sitteth? 'Above all principality and power.' And with Whom it is that thou sittest? With Him. And who thou art? A dead carcase, by nature a child of wrath. And what good hast thou done? Not any. Truly now it is high time to exclaim, 'Oh the Depth of the Riches both of the Wisdom and of the Knowledge of God!'"

It is not then, as followers of Him, bearers of His Name, His disciples, servants, friends, children, brethren, (What words are these for us, defiled earth-worms, who being made from the dust, "to dust shall return!") it is not by any outward relation, however near, that Holy Scripture saith, "He hath made us to sit down in Heavenly places in Christ." Nor is it again alone, because He is the First-Begotten from the dead,[k]" "the First-Born of many brethren," not alone that He hath in Himself placed our human nature above all Principalities and Powers, Angels and Archangels, Cherubim and Seraphim, at the Right Hand of God, with God and in God; or that as our reward hereafter, He has promised, "I go to prepare a place for you, and where I am, there shall ye be also;[l]" it is not only as "heirs through hope,[m]" that this belongs to us, but it is in the union of both these mysteries, that He Who in His One Person uniteth Human with Divine, uniteth us by Himself with God; He Who dwelleth in the highest Heavens, vouchsafes to dwell in us, and by dwelling in us, to make us "one Spirit" with Himself.

[k] Rev. i. 5; Rom. viii. 29. [l] S. John xiv. 2, 3. [m] Tit. iii. 7.

This then is the great blessedness of this our citizenship, as of every other Gift of Grace or Glory, that we have it not in ourselves, but of, and in Christ. We belong to Heaven, because we belong to Him, "members," the Apostle says,[n] "of His Body, of His Flesh, and of His Bones;" His Temple, knit into One with Him, Who "knitteth in one all things in Heaven and in earth." All in us, which is of Heaven, is of His Spirit in us. His Holy Spirit, the Bond[o] of the Oneness of the Father and the Son, Which encircleth all things, taketh us up into Himself. Faith makes present to us things unseen; Hope bears us beyond all time to That we hope for; and he "who dwelleth in Love, dwelleth in God, and God in him;[p]" yet by Faith, and Hope, and Love, we dwell in Heaven, not by any power or virtue even of these Heavenly Graces, but because they are the Effluence of His Spirit, coming forth from Him to us, and bearing us up into Himself. "Standing on earth, thou art in Heaven, if thou lovest God;[q] for not so as the body is uplifted, is the soul uplifted. The body, to be uplifted, changeth its place; the heart, its affection; 'For unto Thee, O Lord, do I lift up my soul.'[r]"

This, again, is the very Mystery and Blessedness of the Sacraments; that by the one, Christ knit us into Himself; by the other, He descendeth to us, that He may become "One with us, and we with Him." This is the force of prayer, that it is a calling down of God into ourselves, a going forth of ourselves to God. A calling of God into ourselves, for our Blessed Lord says, "Shall not your Heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to them that ask Him?[s]" a going forth of ourselves to God, for "the Spirit"

[n] Eph. v. 30.

[o] S. Bernard, Serm. i. in Oct. Paschal. fin. "For the Spirit Himself is the Indissoluble Bond of the Trinity, through Whom as the Father and the Son are One (Unum), so we too are one in Them, through *His* Compassion, Who vouchsafed to pray for this for His disciples, Jesus Christ our Lord" See also S. Aug. de Civ. Dei xi. 24. de Trin. xv. 5, who calls God the Holy Ghost the Unity, Love, and Holiness of the Father and the Son, yet not as Their *Essential* Love.—See note g on Nouet's Life of Jesus Christ in Glory, p. 378. Cleaver.

[p] 1 St. John iv. 16.

[q] S. Aug. in Ps. lxxxv. §, 6.

[r] Ps. xxv. 1.

[s] S. Luke xi. 3.

which He hath given us, "maketh intercession for us.[t]" It is not we alone who pray, if we pray aright; but He, our Lord, Who is prayed by us, Himself prayeth in us, by His Holy "Spirit which He hath given us." Our prayers go up unto the Throne of God, because they are His Voice in us. "No greater gifts," says a father,[u] "could God give to man, than that He should make His Word, through Whom He created all things, a Head unto them, and should conjoin them to Him as members. So that He should be Son of God, and Son of Man, One God with the Father, One Man with men; so that both when we speak in prayer to God, we do not separate from Him the Son, and when the Body of the Son prayeth, it separateth not from Itself Its Head, and He Himself, our Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of God, is the One Saviour of the body, Who both prayeth for us, and prayeth in us, and is prayed by us. He prayeth for us as our High Priest; He prayeth in us, as our Head; He is prayed by us as our God. Let us own then both our words in Him, and His Words in us."

Where is the soul of the devout Communicant? in Heaven or on earth? Surely not on earth, which it is taught to forget, through the Holy Sweetness which streams forth upon it, and the joy which bedews it, that it is washed through its Saviour's Blood. Where is the soul of the penitent, as it poureth forth its sorrows at its Redeemer's Feet, mourns, for love of Him, that it ever offended Him, and abashed and affrighted at itself, and knowing not where to hide itself from itself, hides itself under the Hem of His Garment, yea, would bury itself in His Sacred Side, Whence issued "the Fountain for sin and for uncleanness?[x]" Even a heathen will tell us where. "The soul of one who greatly loveth, is much more in the heart it loveth, than in itself.[y]" It is the very character of pure, intense, earthly love, as the image and offspring of Divine, that it is, as it were, out of itself; the heart findeth no rest in itself; it dwelleth not in itself; it is there where it loveth: there it is

[t] Rom. viii. 26. [u] S. Aug. in Ps. 85. init. [x] Zech xiii. 1.
[y] Plato, see also Cato the Elder, in Plutarch's Life.

at ease, there rests, for that careth; it forgetteth itself, seeketh nothing for itself, but only to be there allowed to dwell, where it loveth to be, rather than in itself. And if death, or the Will of God, sever it from that it loves, how does it seem pent within itself, a burthen[z] to itself, unless it can anew go forth out of itself unto Him, the One Object of its being, Who made it for Himself. And shall not that be much more true of the Love of God, "the soul is much more where it loveth, than where it liveth?[a]" When St. Paul was caught up into Paradise, where his body was, he knew not. "Whether in the body, I cannot tell; or whether out of the body, I cannot tell: God knoweth.[b]" But where his spirit, where himself was, that he knew. "Such an one was caught up into the third Heaven." And if God have, at any time, vouchsafed unto any of us, any more fervent prayer, any longing for Himself, any desire to escape from the misery which sin brought upon us, any yearning for something which shall satisfy the soul, which things seen cannot satisfy, (because they are of earth, it is of Heaven; they from beneath, it, with its Lord, from Above; they of this world, it not of this world;) what is all, from the first gushing forth of the tears of penitence, the first restored feeling of child-like love, the first faint trembling hope that it may again call God, Father; even that unspeakable presence with his Lord, whereby St. Paul was caught up into Paradise,—what is it all but a going forth out of itself? And to Whom does it, to Whom other can it go? save to Him, Who Himself, by Bonds of His Love, draws it; by His Spirit upbears it.

And so when our hearts are most out of ourselves for joy, when we are most longing for that Ineffable Gift of Himself in His Sacrament, the Priest says, "Lift up your hearts," and ye answer, "We lift them up unto the Lord;" "lift up our hearts with our hands unto Him that dwelleth in the Heavens.[c]" Where are they then? with us? Nay, but

[z] See S. Aug. Conf. iv. 6, 7. p. 51, 2. Oxf. Tr.
[a] Anima magis est ubi amat, quam ubi animat. S. Aug.
[b] 2 Cor. xii. 2, 3.
[c] Lam. iii. 41.

we have "lift them up," not in place, but in love; not in space, (as if God were in Heaven only, not every where, since in Him "we live and move, and have our being,") yet in truth. They are borne out of themselves in thankful love and longing, and are more with Him they would long for, than with our bodies which for the time they inhabit. The spirit, lifted up by the Spirit, is more with the Father of Spirits than with the flesh. The "firstfruits of the Spirit,[d]" return unto God Who gave it, the foretaste of the Everlasting Dwelling with Him, by Whose Love it loves, and is borne to Him.

We cannot of ourselves, go forth of ourselves, any more than we can of ourselves in body leave this earth. But for this cause did our Lord come down to this earth, that He might with us ascend whither He was before, that we might through His Spirit, in spirit thither "ascend" now, "and with Him continually dwell," that hereafter we might in the body also, be "caught to meet the Lord in the air, and so for ever to be with the Lord.[e]" But we can, at least, follow Him Who draweth us. We can, at least, not hold back, when He, as on this day, by the very Mysteries of our Faith, lifts us up above all created things, draws our eyes up and up to follow our Ascending Lord out of sight, until we lose ourselves amid the Choirs of Angels, as they sing, "Who is the King of Glory? Even the Lord of Hosts, He is the King of Glory.[f]"

Oh gaze on for a while there! There behold we the orders of the Angels, the Seraphim with burning love, the Angels round about the throne, and "the seven Spirits of God" before it, and "the ten thousand times ten thousand, and thousands of thousands, who say with a loud voice, Blessing, and honour, and glory, and power, be unto Him that sitteth upon the Throne, and unto the Lamb, for ever and ever," and "the hundred and forty and four thousand, who follow the Lamb whithersoever He goeth," and "the great multitude which no man could number, of all nations, and kindreds, and people, and tongues, who stand before the

[d] Rom. viii. 25. [e] 1 Thess. iv. 17. [f] Ps. xxiv. 8, 10.

throne, and before the Lamb, clothed with white robes, and palms in their hands, and crying with a loud voice, 'Salvation to our God Which sitteth upon the Throne, and unto the Lamb:[g]" (among them are yourselves, brethren, if ye are, or if with purpose of heart, ye will henceforth be God's,) and say ye, "Is it good to be there or here?" not here in this Church of God, which is the Image of Heaven, but here on this earth? Where shall we store our treasures, here or there? Where set our hearts, here or there? In whether of the twain is the full contentment of the heart? Where is there joy that fadeth not, the Sun Who setteth not, the Love Which chilleth not, the Friend Who forsaketh not? Where is thy Redeemer, thy Lord, thy God?

Would we could abide for awhile upon that Holy Mount! Look down from the mountain top upon the sea shore, canst thou see, upon the level beach, which of two sand-grains is higher than the other? When the moon is clad with the full light of the sun, its surface becomes one plane. And shall we, then, on whom the True Sun has not risen only, but hath ascended to the highest Heaven, that all who can love should be drawn unto Him, roll round Him, shall we, in the full glow of His light, grope as in darkness? Shall we, whom He has made to "sit with Himself," as on this day, "in Heavenly Places," look up, as if from below, with admiration on any created thing? might not earth itself well disappear from our sight, and our eyes be blinded by that Brightness to all created glory, our ears deafened to all sound except the Harmony of the Love of God? What can be great to him, whose own God is? Surely "all gold is as dust, and the fine gold as the mire of the streets." What were all beside Him, even if it could abide? Surely, as the Heavens are higher than the earth, yea,—but what were the height of the Heaven above the earth? The height of the highest created thing were finite; the height of the things of Heaven is infinite: for they are the Love of Christ which passeth knowledge, the depth of the Wisdom of God, which none can reach unto; the Light wherein He

[g] Rev. iv. 5; v. 6, 11, 13; xiv. 1; vii. 9, 10. [h] 1 Cor. ii. 10, 11.

dwelleth, which no man can approach unto; the Abyss of that Divinity, which none can search into,[h] save the Co-equal Son and Holy Spirit.

What were all the eminence of the whole world, all the kingdoms of the world and the glory of them, compared with the very lowest place in Heaven? What were all the praises of all mankind, compared with the sweetness of one note of the new song? What all the treasures of riches, compared with the Crown set upon thy head by thy Redeemer's Hand? What all pleasure of sense, by the side of that "Pure Water of Life?[i]" And yet these sound like created things; the Bliss of Heaven is no created thing, nor in things created. "The Torrent of Pleasure" is the Love of God, the Glory of thy Redeemer, the Majesty, Beauty, Holiness, Goodness, All Infinite, because all of the Infinity of God; all, if thou willest with an entire will, are thine; for God shall be "the Strength of thy heart, and thy Portion for ever."

Oh choose ye then, on this Great Day, if ye have not yet chosen; if ye have, in the light of that Heaven which your Saviour this day opened for you, opens to you, pray ye Him to bind your choice by the bonds of His Everlasting Love. Let not this great sight fade from your eyes. Let not the tinsel of the world dazzle the eyes which were formed to "see the King in His Beauty.[k]" Let not the praise of men dull the ears, which were formed to hear the Blissful Words, "Well done, good and faithful servant." Let not cares, riches, pleasures of this world, choke the heart, which was formed to contain the Love of God. Pray, and all is thine. Thine is God Himself, who teacheth thee to pray for Himself. To pray is to go forth from earth, and to live in Heaven. Learn to commend thy daily acts to God, so shall the dry every-day duties of common life be steps to Heaven, and lift thy heart thither; commend thyself to God in moments of leisure, so shall thy rest be a rest in God, and conduct thee to thine Everlasting Rest. He, thy Head, is Above; shall the heart be any more below?

[i] Rev. xxii. 1. [k] Is. xxxiii. 17.

O! our Saviour, of ourselves we cannot love Thee, cannot follow Thee, cannot cleave unto Thee; but Thou didst come down that we might love Thee, didst ascend that we might follow Thee, didst bind us round Thee as Thy girdle,[1] that we might be held fast unto Thee. Thou Who hast loved us, make us to love Thee; Thou who hast sought us, make us to seek Thee; Thou Who, when lost, didst find us, be Thou Thyself the Way, that we may find Thee, and be found in Thee, our Only Hope, and our Everlasting Joy!

Now unto God, "Rich in Mercy," Who "for His Great Love wherewith He loved us, even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ, and hath raised us up together, and made us sit together in Heavenly Places in Christ Jesus," "be Blessing, and Glory, and Wisdom, and Thanksgiving, and Honour, and Power, and Might, for ever and ever. Amen."

[1] Jeremiah xiii. 11. "As the girdle cleaveth unto the loins of a man, so have I caused to cleave unto Me the whole house of Israel, and the whole house of Judah, saith the Lord." "The people becometh, as it were, a girdle of God. The girdle is of linen; for linen hath its origin from the earth; for it is a plant shooting forth from the earth; there after it hath been cultivated, it is combed and washed, and rubbed, and prepared by much labour, that it may become of such sort as to be made a girdle. And we all then, having our birth of earth, are as it were a girdle of God. And we need much preparation, to be bruised and washed, that we may lose the colour of earth, for the natural colour of earth is dark; that which it receives artificially is very bright. So are we by nature. We are black when we come to belief; then we are cleansed, and we become linen bright and pure; then also are we entwined as a girdle for God, when we are found worthy to be made to cleave unto God, and God doth not put us off. This girdle is the Church of the Gentiles; which must know that if God spared not the former people, how much less will He spare her, if she sinneth, and becometh unworthy to be placed near God. But He that cleaveth unto the Lord is one Spirit in Christ Jesus." Origen ad Loc. Hom. ii. fin. "Every holy man is a girdle of God, who being taken from the earth, and the clay of the earth, is united and conjoined to God." S. Jer. ad Loc.

SERMON XXII.

THE CHRISTIAN THE TEMPLE OF GOD.

WHIT-SUNDAY.

JOHN XIV. 15—17.

"If ye love Me, keep My Commandments; and I will pray the Father, and He shall give you Another Comforter, that He may abide with you for ever; even the Spirit of Truth, Whom the world cannot receive, because it seeth Him not, neither knoweth Him; but ye know Him, for He dwelleth with you, and shall be in you."

EVERY Festival of the Mysteries of our Faith is, in turn, the greatest, and all alike are equal. Each seemeth, for the time, the greatest, because each bringeth to our nothingness the Infinity of God. All are alike equal, for all relate to that Infinity, in Which there are no degrees, no parts, no more or less, no bounds, no beginning, no end, no time. But God, in Himself Infinite, Unchangeable, and One, shews Himself to His creatures in degree and measure, and divides, as it were, His Ineffable Light in the Bow which is around the Throne;[a] so may we, who cannot behold His Glory Who sitteth thereon, as HE IS, behold His Beauty and Love, parted in the varied hues of that Mercy which droppeth from Above. In each separate Mystery is the

[a] Rev. iv. 3.

Operation of the Trinity, although for us the Son Alone took Flesh, suffered, died, rose again, ascended; the Holy Spirit Alone is "shed abroad in our hearts," although, through Him, the Father and the Son come and make their Abode in the faithful. Each Mystery is, at once, a stooping down of His Unchangeable Majesty, and a raising up of our deep-sunken misery. The earlier Mysteries presuppose what is in time the later; the later crown the earlier, yet all is one in God. The Eternal Son took our flesh, that He, Who was God and Man, might die; the Passion was the end of the Spotless Birth; yet His Incarnation had besides a Mystery of Its Own, in that It took our nature into God. The Ascension gave us a Mediator at God's Right Hand, there "to appear in the Presence of God for us," and that Mediator is such, because He has that which is ours, and has placed our human nature, for ever united with Himself, in God. Yet was all this Glory as yet out of us. It was our nature which God the Son took; our nature which He raised the third day; ours which "could not be held of death,[b]" nor "see corruption;" ours which He raised for ever incorruptible, spiritual, glorious, in power; ours which He bore above the stars, and the Heaven of Heavens, and all their Hosts, to be, in His Divine Person, adored "by all in Heaven, and in earth, and under the earth." Great was the earnest of what was in store for us, "when," says a father,[c] "to that nature to which it was said, 'Dust thou

[b] Acts ii. 24.

[c] "That nature to which it was said, 'dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return,' this day went into Heaven."—S. Greg. Hom. 29. in Evang. § 10. See also S. Chrys. on Eph. i. 20. p. 127. sqq. Oxf. Tr. And S. Leo. Serm. 73. de Ascens. 2. fin. "And in truth great and ineffable was the cause of rejoicing, when in the sight of the holy multitude, the Nature of the human race ascended above all dignity of Heavenly Creatures, to mount above the Orders of Angels, and to be raised aloft above the heights of the Archangels, and to have no bound to Its advancement in any Majesty, save when, received to sit with the Eternal Father, it was associated in His Throne to His Glory, with Whose Nature It was united in the Son. Since then the Ascent of Christ is our advancement, and where the Glory of the Head preceded, thither the hope also of the body is called, let us exult with joy proportionate!—For this day not only have we been established as the possessors of Paradise, but have in Christ also penetrated the Highest Heavens, having, through the Ineffable Grace of Christ, obtained greater things than we had lost through envy of

art, and unto dust shalt thou return,' to that Nature, united for ever to the Person of the Son, it was said, what never was said to any of the Angels at any time, 'Sit Thou on My Right Hand.'" Yet was it our nature still, not ourselves. Our Nature was in God; we whose nature it is, were sunk in the mire of sin. It was in the highest Heavens, we in the lowest depths; so low, that we scarce knew our own depth of misery, or could say, "Out of the deep have I cried unto Thee, O Lord.[d]" *It* was filled with the Fulness of the Glory of His Godhead, Who had made It His Own; in *us* the Image of God was sore defaced, so that scarce a trace of its former brightness could be seen amid our deep decay and wretchedness. Yet it could not be that He should not finish what He had so begun. Whit-Sunday is the filling up of the Ascension. The wondrous exchange was half made on the Ascension, when Man in God was taken up into Heaven, and sat on His Father's Throne; the day of Pentecost fulfilled the Promise of the Father, and as man now dwelt in God, so God, in a New and Ineffable Way, dwelt thenceforth in man. He Who, in substance of our flesh, had dwelt among us, had suffered the ills of our mortal nature, had hungered, been scourged, mocked, crucified, died, was now, in that Very Flesh, in the Unspeakable Glory of the Godhead; and now, on this day, He sent us in exchange God the Holy Spirit, to dwell really, truly, Substantially[e], in the souls of men. Not of course that He so dwelt in any man, as God the Son was united with the Man Christ Jesus; this were blasphemy; but He does really and truly dwell in man, not by mere Gifts and Graces, however great, but by Himself. As truly as the soul dwells in the body, and we see it not; we know that we have it; it gives us power of motion, thought, life, speech, will, affections, love; it fills every part of us, yet we know not where it dwells; we know we have it, even

the Devil. For us, whom the virulent enemy cast down from the blessedness of our first abode, hath the Son of God placed, con-corporated with Himself, at the Right Hand of the Father."

[d] Ps. cxxx. 1.

[e] See S. Cyril, above, p. 235, note f, 239. p.

although some of us might not know how to prove that they have it, and ungodly men have denied it, and as they have said, "There is no God,[f]" so they have said, that we are like the brutes that perish. Even so God the Holy Ghost dwells truly and really in the hearts of the faithful, is the Life of the soul itself, unites them to Christ, is the Fountain of all Graces, ("His Blessed Unction from Above is Comfort, Life, and Fire of Love,") although they cannot say how He dwells within them, and the world which "cannot receive" Him, cannot know Him, believes not what it understands not. "The world," says our Lord,[g] "cannot receive Him, because it seeth Him not, neither knoweth Him; but ye know Him, for He dwelleth with you, and shall be in you." Great, indeed, were any, the least, Gifts of God. Great were it that He should vouchsafe to gild over this our clay; to take us up amid our defilements, cleanse us from our sins, make us holy, give us spiritual wisdom, love, joy, peace, gentleness, goodness, truth. Great were it, when we deserved nothing but His wrath, and had marred His Image in us, and wasted His Gifts, had He vouchsafed to restore to us any of the Treasure which once was ours, and which we had lost, or, (God have mercy,) had "trampled under foot.[h]" Great were it that we should for unholy be made holy, for haters of God be made to love Him, for companions of devils be made fellow-citizens with Angels; poor and miserable, to be clad with the Robe of Righteousness. But now, such is the Wondrous Goodness of God, such His Overflowing Love towards us, His Divine Joy in imparting Himself to us His most fallen creatures, if we will but receive Him, that this His Divine Work in us, He worketh in a way wholly Divine. It is not enough for His Love, to give us any or all the Gifts of His Grace; not enough to give us His Love, and "Righteousness, and Sanctification, and Redemption;" but He is Himself all these and all besides to us. His Gifts are the Fruits of The Spirit, not without us but within us. His Gifts stream forth from His Gift, Himself.

[f] Ps. xiv. 1. [g] S. John xiv. 17. [h] Heb. x. 29.

His Gift is Himself. He giveth us not only, if we will, His various Graces; He *is* to us "Wisdom, and Righteousness, and Sanctification, and Redemption;[i]" and that by Indwelling!

This was "the Promise of the Father,[k]" in the Old Testament. "A new heart will I give you, and a new Spirit will I put within you; I will put My Spirit within you, and cause you to walk in My Statutes, and ye shall keep My Judgments and do them;[l]" even as our Blessed Lord says, "If a man love Me, he will keep My Words, and My Father will love him, and We will come unto Him, and make Our Abode with him.[m]" "Ye shall know," it saith again, "that I am the Lord, when I have opened your graves,[n]" wherein we lay dead, in the foulness of our corruption, and stank through our sins, and the heavy stone of our earthliness lay upon us, motionless to all good, "and brought you up out of your graves," as risen with Christ, "and shall put My Spirit *within* you and ye shall live." Even as our blessed Lord says, "Because I live, ye shall live also.[o]"

This was the one Gift promised on the Ascension. It is said to our Lord, "Thou hast ascended up on high, Thou hast led captivity captive; Thou hast received Gifts for men;" received as Man for men, what as God He gave. What Gifts? "yea for the rebellious also, that the Lord God should dwell in them," "should dwell," as the deep word of Holy Scripture, in God's own language, says, "should tabernacle[p]" in them, as the Schechinah or His Glorious Presence came down in Majesty, when God hallowed His visible Temple, and Israel fell on their faces for awe at the Presence of God. Such too was our Blessed Lord's Promise. "If ye love Me, keep My Command-

[i] 1 Cor. i. 30. [k] S. Luke xxiv. 49.; Acts i. 4. [l] Ezek. xxxvi. 26, 27.
[m] S. John xiv. 23. [n] Ezek. xxxvii. 13, 14. [o] S. John xiv. 19.

[p] אַף סוֹרְרִים לִשְׁכֹּן Ps. lxviii. 18. "Thou didst not regard their former disobedience, but even although seeing them contradicting, Thou didst continue to do them good, until Thou madest them Thine Own Abode" (*οἰκητήριον*). Theod. ad Loc. Even the Chaldee has, "upon the rebellious, who become proselytes and return by repentance, the Schechinah of the Glory of the Lord God dwelleth."

ments, and I" (as Man, He saith,) "will pray the Father, and He shall give you Another Comforter, that He may abide with you for ever.[q]" Another? Then He Himself too was a Comforter, as also our Advocate. "Another Comforter?" Then, since His Presence is to be like our Lord's, this Second, Other, Blessed Comforter, must, like Him, be ever with us, must be close at hand to counsel, check, guide, tenderly reprove, heal, uplift, commune with us by the way, kindle our hearts, sustain, feed, "teach us to pray," pray with us, for us, lift our souls to God, "manifest to us the Father," "be with us," "full of Grace and Truth." For all this, and how much besides! was our Loving Lord to those whom He drew near to Himself. And yet He, This Other Comforter, must be all this, and even more than this. Why? For our Lord said that He was to be to us more than His Very Self. "Nevertheless," He said, "when sorrow filled their hearts," at His departure, "I tell you the truth, It is expedient for you that I go away; for if I go not away, the Comforter will not come unto you; but if I depart I will send Him unto you.[r]" How should Another be more to them, than their very Lord? It comforteth us not when we lose an earthly friend, if any promise us a greater, better friend. It is not still he we love. And how should any be a better friend than He, our Lord, our Redeemer, and our God? He hath said, "Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends.[s]" Yet not, as friends, did He lay down His Life for us, but as enemies. "If, when we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the Death of His Son, much more, being reconciled, we shall be saved by His Life.[t]" What love must He have had, Who loved us when we were hateful, and rebellious, and Holy Scripture says "His enemies," and when He came to save us, crucified Him! What love like His, Who left Heaven to save us from Hell? What comfort like His Love? How then could any replace Him to our souls, Who had so loved them, had bought them so

[q] S. John xiv. 15, 16.
[r] Ib. xvi. 6, 7.
[s] S. John xv. 13.
[t] Rom. v. 10.

dearly, had given Himself wholly for them? How could any Comforter be better for us than He, Who "knew what was in man,[u]" knew our wants, Who had Himself taken "all our miseries, sin only excepted," Who "knew how to be touched with the feeling of our infirmities, having been in all points tempted as we are, yet without sin?[x]" Not better, but nearer. Not better, but His Very Self again, only in a nearer, dearer way. Himself, "not to go in and out among us,[y]" but, if we admit Him, "to abide with us for ever;[z]" not to join Himself to us by the way, but to be Himself our Way; not to eat and drink with us, but to be Himself our Food; not only to talk with us, even as at that blessed moment when the hearts of His disciples burned within them, but Himself to be the Fire of Love within us; not even "to have the Words of Eternal Life[a]" and to impart them to us, as our Master, but Himself to "write," yea, Himself to "be the Law in our hearts;" not to be without us, our Friend, to call us (amazing words) "friends," to speak to our hearts, but to unite Himself to us; not to fold us only in His Love, but to unite Himself to our very souls (which neither Angel nor Archangel could do), Himself to dwell in them! He would be Himself the Very Life of our souls, Himself the Love wherewith we love Himself, Himself the Righteousness, through Whose Presence we keep His Commandments; Himself the Holiness whereby we are holy; the Wisdom, whereby we know His Will; Himself our Joy wherewith we joy in Him; Himself our Peace, whereby, "at peace with God the Father,[b]" we rest in Him; Himself our Hope, Himself Whom we hope for; Himself the Fountain of Eternal Light, Whereby we see His Light; Himself the Earnest of our everlasting Inheritance; Himself our Portion, and Possession, and Inheritance of which He is the Earnest. For so He saith, "My Father will love Him, and We will come unto Him and make Our abode with Him." And how do The Father and The Son come and make Their Abode in any? Even by the Spirit,

[u] S. John ii. 25. [x] Heb. iv. 15. [y] Acts i. 21.
[z] S. John xiv. 16. [a] Ib. vi. 68. [b] Rom. v. 1.

Who is of The Father and The Son, the Inseparable Bond of Both. "In Whom," says Holy Scripture,[c] even in the Lord Jesus Christ, "ye are builded together for an habitation of God through the Spirit." And our Lord Himself, in promising the Other Comforter, says, "I will not leave you comfortless, I will come to you.[d]" He would send, and He would Himself come to the soul. For where the Spirit is, there is Himself; and there is The Father, since He is the Spirit of The Father and The Son, and One and Inseparable is The Trinity.

And so Holy Scripture speaks of the Gifts of the Spirit as distinct from Himself in the soul. "The Love of God is shed abroad in our hearts, by the Holy Ghost Which is given unto us." He poureth forth His Love, it says, into our hearts, such is the profusion of His Love, yet not the very outpouring of His Love contenteth His Love; it is not yet His Gift. For His Gift is the Very Fountain of His Love; it is poured out, and forth, yea, as it were, emptied forth[e] into our hearts. How? "by the Holy Ghost which He hath given us." He giveth us the Holy Ghost,

[c] Ephes. ii. 22. [d] S. John xiv. 18.

[e] ἐκκέχυται· Rom. v. 5. ἐκχέω, ἐκχύνω are used of large outpourings of the Spirit, Acts ii. 17, 18, 33.; x. 45; of the emptying of the vials of the Angels, Rev. xvi. "If 'by the Love of God, shed abroad in our hearts,' he meaneth that wherewith we are loved by God, it is certain that he sets Love as the highest end chiefest Gift of the Holy Spirit, which being first received as a Gift from God, we are thereby enabled to love God, that we are loved of God. For Paul himself speaketh of the Spirit of Love (Rom. xv. 30) and God is said to be Love, (1 S. John iv. 8) and Christ is called the Son of His Love (Col. i. 13). But if the Spirit be of Love, and the Son of Love, and God is Love, it is clear that from the One Fountain of Paternal Deity, the Son also and Holy Spirit are to be understood, out of Whose Abundance the Abundance of Love is inpoured into the hearts of the faithful, that they may receive the participation of the Divine Nature as the Apostle taught, (2 S. Pet. i. 4,) that by that Gift of the Holy Spirit may be fulfilled that Word which the Lord spake, 'As Thou, Father, art in Me, and I in Thee, that they also may be One in Us;' (S. John xvii. 21.) being made, namely, 'partakers of the Divine Nature,' in the Abundance of Love ministered through the Holy Spirit." Origen. ad Loc. l. 4. § 9. "And he does not say 'is given to,' but 'is shed abroad' in our hearts, so shewing the profusion of it. That gift, then, which is the greatest possible, He hath given; not heaven, and earth, and sea, but what is more precious than any of these, and hath rendered us Angels from being men, yea, sons of God, and brethren of Christ. But what is this Gift? The Holy Spirit. He hath shed abroad the full Fountain of His Blessings." S. Chrys. on Rom. v. 5. p. 141. Oxf. Tr.

as it were, for our own, "His Gift" in us, without recall, "without repentance" on His Part; and through His Presence Who is Love, He poureth forth His Love in us. And so, by that wonderful interchange, we are said to dwell in God and He in us, since He Who filleth all things taketh us into Himself, by coming Himself into our souls, and knitting them to Him; "we dwell in Christ, and Christ in us;" His Spirit dwelleth in us, and we in Him. All is One Ineffable Gift. "Ye," says St. Paul,[f] "are not in the flesh, but in the Spirit, if so be that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you." "If Christ be in you." "If the Spirit of Him Who raised up Jesus from the dead dwell in you." "We have received, not the Spirit of the world, but the Spirit which is of God." "God hath sent forth the Spirit of His Son into your hearts." "We live in the Spirit," "live according to God in the Spirit." "Hereby know we that we dwell in Him and He in us, because He hath given us of His Spirit." So that it is one and the same blessed truth, that the Spirit of God should dwell in us, Christ dwell in us, the Spirit of The Father be in us, and that we be in Christ, in the Spirit, we are the Temple of God, and the Spirit of God dwelleth in us. One and the same blessed, aweful, unutterable truth is it, that God Who vouchsafed to take our flesh, vouchsafes to dwell in us who are flesh, vouchsafes to be the Life of our life, to knit us unto Him, by coming into us to take us into Himself.

Blessed it is, thrice blessed, yet aweful truth. "Weigh well," says an ancient saintly Bishop[g], "weigh well, dearest brethren, what a dignity that is, to have, in the dwelling-place of the heart, the Presence of God." "Put off thy shoes from off thy feet," said God[h] to Moses, "for the place whereon thou standest, is holy ground." "Whosoever toucheth the Mount shall be surely put to death[i]." If such was the sacredness of the outward spots of this earth, where God vouchsafed to be seen, as man can see Him,

[f] Rom. viii. 9, 10, 11.; 1 Cor. ii. 12.; Gal. iv. 6.; v. 25.; 1 S. Pet. iv. 6.; 1 S. John iv. 13.
[g] S. Greg. Hom. 30. in Evang. § 2.
[h] Exod. iii. 5.
[i] Ib. xix. 12.

what must be that earth, wherein the Lord of Heaven and earth vouchsafes to dwell? If the Psalmist says[k], "fall down at His Footstool, Holy is He," what must be His very Shrine? If so holy the spot where, through some created form only, the Unseen God gave some token of His Presence, what, where the Holy Trinity really, in Substance[l], dwells through the Spirit?

Awful thought is it, in the greatness of its bliss, the height of its hopes, alas, that we must add, (if on this blessed day we may speak of what is so sorrowful,) in the depth of our penitence. Yet even on this day of our gladness we may speak of it, for where there is penitence, there is gladness in Heaven, there are the "unutterable groanings" of the Spirit, there the Holy Dove on the Cross uttereth a voice which shall be heard on high, there the Spirit intreateth, there is the renewed Presence of the Comforter hallowing anew His Own Temple which had been defiled.

This, then, is the very misery of sin, that it brings what is so unholy so close into the Presence of the All-Holy. Alas! of us too is that true, "they know not what they do." Ye would shrink, my brethren, from uttering here especially any unholy words. Ye would be startled, if any of those miserable words, which are heard in our streets, fell upon your ear here. Ye could not imagine yourselves here, doing any deed of shame. Ye would here, above all places, hate an evil thought which should be darted into your mind. Ye think rightly. Natural reverence itself so teaches us. Again, it saddens the mind, when in ungodly times these Houses of God have been defiled. Ye cannot bear to think what it would be, here, where ye have worshipped, have received the Bread of Life, that all loathsome and disgusting creatures should harbour, every thing sickening to every sense, every thing most revolting and unclean, should be gathered here to defile it and make it loathsome. My brethren, ye are this Temple, the Temple of God, only far holier. And every thing loathsome in the

[k] Ps. xcix. 5.

[l] S. Cyril, above p. 235. f. 239. p.

whole world, could it be brought together into one, is but a faint picture of the loathsomeness of one deadly sin.

This, then, is the intense, sickening, misery of sin, that it is brought close into the very Presence of God within us. Sins begin in thought; yet thought is of the soul, and in the soul dwelleth God the Holy Spirit. Thought goes on to consent of the will. No deadly sin is committed, but the soul has first willed it; it has willed it in the Very Presence of God, not afar off, not in Heaven, not under His Holy Eye alone, but there where He came to hallow us; where, by the voice of our conscience, He pleaded with us; where, if we held on in sin, we must first stifle our conscience, that is, deaden His Voice, nay, cast Him forth! What if any of us have not been tempted only, but been our own tempters, have invited the sin into our souls; have called it in, and cherished it, and nourished and made room for it, and let it come in and out at will; brought it, that is, face to Face, in all its loathsomeness, where God was! And then, perhaps, followed acts of sin, and the completed misery. Then the Dwelling-place of the Trinity became the hold of devils[m]. Babylon is, among other things, the picture of the ruined soul. Yet Holy Scripture says,[n] "Babylon the great is fallen, is fallen, and is become the habitation of devils, and the hold of every foul spirit, and a cage of every unclean and hateful bird." "The wild beast of the desert shall lie there, and their houses shall be full of doleful creatures, and owls shall dwell there, and satyrs shall dance there, and the wild beasts shall cry in their desolate houses, and dragons in their pleasant palaces.[o]" Yet what is such a picture to the truth? What can set forth the unutterable misery, when a soul, once washed by the Blood of Christ, yea, Scripture saith[p], "espoused as a chaste virgin

[m] "Where [in the Church] before dwelt the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Spirit, and Angels presided over its ministries, there shall beasts dwell."—S. Jer. in Soph. c. 2. fin. and elsewhere. "The devil possesseth the hearts of all the reprobates now too, before he appears openly, and through his hidden malice occupies them as his own den."—S. Greg. Mor. l. xxvii. c. 26. See more at length, t. iii. p. 236. sqq. Oxf. Tr.

[n] Rev. xviii. 2. [o] Is. xiii. 21, 22. [p] 2 Cor. xi. 2.

unto Him," the Home of the Spirit, where not Angels visited, but God dwelt, chose sin for God, brought the thoughts, and deeds of the evil one into the Shrine which He hallows? Yea, Scripture says[q], such let "the unclean spirit bring in seven other spirits, more wicked than himself, to dwell there," "and satyrs to dance there," in the soul which "He had chosen as an habitation for Himself, to put His Name there," the Name of the All-Holy Trinity; yea, He "had longed for her," and "betrothed her" to Himself. Truly, "they have defiled the Dwelling-place of Thy Name, to the ground." "The enemy hath persecuted the soul and taken it, has trod down her life upon the earth, and laid her honour in the dust."

They knew not what they did. They knew, perhaps, that they drowned the voice which checked them within, but they knew not that it was the Very Voice of God in their souls. They knew that they would not do it under the eye of parents, or friends whom they valued; they knew not that this very feeling was from Him, the Only Friend of the soul, her Father, Guardian, Comforter. They knew that they could not bear the thoughts they harboured to be laid bare to man; they knew not that they were thought in the very Presence of God. And so Adam knew not that his one deadly sin would open hell, ruin a whole world, live on, yea rather, be an unending source of death which should never die. We know that we should not sin, that we should serve God; but the deadliness of sin, as the Blessedness of the Love of God, "eye hath not seen, nor ear heard."

Yet even thus, comfort comes from the Source of all Comfort, the Cross of Christ. "They knew not what they did." And even in those dread cases, where, as the Apostle says, "they crucify to themselves the Son of God afresh, and put Him to an open shame;" greater is the Power of the Prayer of the Crucified, than the guilt of His crucifiers. For these too is that prayer heard, "Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do."

[q] S. Matt. xii. 43—45; Ps. cxxxii. 13, 14; Hos. ii. 19, 20; Ps. lxxiv. 7; vii. 5.

And so, again, the greatness of that Love wherewith God loved us, in that He gave us of His Spirit, is the comfort and hope of the penitent, as it is the bright gladness of heart of those who have heard His Loving Words, "If ye love Me, keep My Commandments." He Who hath done so great things for us, doth not willingly leave the soul which He hath made, which He bought to Himself at so great a Price, to whom He gave so great a Gift. It grieveth Him to depart. "Grieve not," He says, "the Holy Spirit of God, whereby ye were sealed unto the Day of Redemption[r]," as though it were a sorrow to Him Who hath Everlasting Bliss, to leave the soul which He hath once made His own. And marred, defiled, sin-stained, as a soul may be, He hath not left that soul, which can yet loathe its own stains; His Love has not yet forsaken her, which can yet hate what it has been, and long to love Him Whom once she "would not to have reign over" her. Yea, He will yet fan that remaining spark into a flame, which shall kindle the whole soul. For that spark of Life is His Presence in the soul, Who is our Advocate; and when He pleads, how will not God hear? Where He is, is not Holiness only, but the very Fountain of Holiness. He, if we pray Him, will "wash us more and more from our sins," cleanse all our spots, make the very memory of sin cease to be defiling, yea, a spur to our obedience, a very spring of love, in that, "much forgiven," we shall, through His Gift, "much love."

Only, my brethren, whether your first robe have, by God's mercy, been but slightly spotted, or whether it be new cleansed by tears and His Word of Forgiveness, be very jealous what ye now do. Reverence the Presence of God in yourselves and others. Ye are not your own; but His Who hath so dearly bought you and Who by His Indwelling Spirit would hallow you. The Presence of the Spirit is "the Earnest[s]" of Heaven; not an earnest which

[r] Ephes. iv. 30.

[s] 2 Cor. i. 22.; v. 5.; Eph. i. 14. "An earnest is a part of the whole. He hath purchased, what we are most concerned in, our Salvation, and hath given us an Earnest in the meanwhile. In the same way as in case of war they give hostages

shall be taken from you, but which shall be enlarged, as ye are enlarged to receive it. "The Father," our Blessed Lord saith, "shall give you Another Comforter, that He may abide with you for ever."

Yet great as that Gift is, the soul which can contain It cannot contain It and the world also. The soul can contain God Who is Infinite, for He hath said, "I will dwell in them and walk in them.[t]" He, by His Presence, will so enlarge the soul, that, like the garden of Eden, He should (so Scripture speaks after our infirmity) walk in it, and it shall be His pleasure to dwell there. The whole world cannot fill the soul, for it can be filled by nothing but God. Had it all the kingdoms of earth and the glory of them, it would still crave; for they are "ashes" and not "bread," earth, and not its God. Yet although all the world could not fill it, and it *can* contain God, it cannot contain the world *and* God: for "God is a jealous God.[u]" He, the Infinite Source of Love, must be loved with an entire love. He would give us All He is. He asks of us in return the nothingness we are.

Oh trifle not then any longer, if thou ever hast, with thine own soul, which thy Saviour has so loved, that of it He saith, as He has said of nought besides, "Here will I dwell, for I have a delight therein.[x]." Count not of slight value the souls of thy brethren, whom with thyself Christ has so prized. Seek to wean thine own soul more and more from all which is not God. Seek as thou mayest to win to Him the souls of thy brethren, whom Christ hath made His own. Sore is the sight of one for whom Christ died, and who knoweth not its own priceless worth.

Seek we to impress on ourselves, Whose and what we are. Wherever we go, whatever our calling, duties, employment, recollect we our own sacredness. Commit thyself morning by morning to God, to guard thee as His Own

between nation and nation, just so hath God also given His Son as a Pledge of peace and solemn treaties, and, further, the Holy Spirit which is from Him. For they that are indeed partakers of the Spirit, know that He is the Earnest of our inheritance." S. Chrys. ad loc.

[t] 2 Cor. vi. 16. [u] Exod. xx. 5.; xxxiv. 14. [x] Ps. cxxxii. 13.

Shrine. What has thy soul to do with idle thoughts, which has God for its Inmate? What thy tongue with idle words which God would move to "speak the wonderful works of God?" What the heart with unloving thoughts, where God, Who is Love, dwelleth? What hast thou to do with untruth, to whom "the Comforter, the Spirit of Truth, hath come" to make His abode? What with thoughts or words of pride, to cure whose pride He Who "dwelleth in the highest Heavens," humbled Himself to dwell in thy lowliness? What with impurity, who art the dwelling-place of the All-Holy God?

But as thou, by God's Grace, purgest thyself from these, He Who gave thee Grace to use that Grace, will, by that Grace, enlarge thee; enlarging thee, will dwell in thee more largely. Thou mayest not feel or know His Presence, yet in each passion thou by His Grace quellest, each temptation thou by His Grace resistest, each prompting to which thou by His Grace hearkenest, each groan for past sin thou by His Grace utterest, each act of love thou by His Grace doest, He will be more and more present to thy soul. For on our use of Grace He bestoweth more Grace, and Grace is the Presence of the Comforter, Whom "He will give you that He may abide in you for ever." It is His Own Presence, Who became Man that men might become partakers of Himself and His Divine Nature, Who, of all, saint or penitent, is the Everlasting Joy of all His redeemed.

SERMON XXIII.

THE WILL OF GOD THE CURE OF SELF-WILL.

FEAST OF THE CIRCUMCISION.

St. Matthew xxvi. 39.

"Not as I will, but as Thou."

Truly, from His Very Birth, did our Divine Lord fulfil that great Word of Prophecy, "Lo, I come to fulfil Thy Will, O My God.[a]" Man, in Paradise, had sought his own will, to "be as God." God had made him as god on earth, to all below him. He had made him in the Image of God. He had "put all things in subjection under his feet,[b]" so long as he remained subject to Him Who placed them under him. Man was under God Alone; all visible things besides were under man. What was there not in store for him, about whose creation the Ever-Blessed Trinity deigned to consult, "Let us make man in Our Image, after Our Likeness?" He had made him the Image of His Own Immortality, that he could never cease to be; of His Own Sovereignty, the visible lord of the Creation, over which He Himself ruled Unseen. He had given to him the Image of His Own Free-will, that as He Himself doth all things because He willeth, and "whatsoever the Lord pleased, that doth He,[c]" and of His Own Free-will created man, and

[a] Ps. xl. 7, 8. [b] Ib. viii. 4, 6. [c] Ib. cxxxv. 6.

loved him; so man should have the free-will, freely to choose God and to love Him. What an unutterable, aweful Gift is that Free-will, without which Heaven would not be what it is, and Hell were not.[d] It is Angels' glory and bliss to be the Ministers of God, "to do His Pleasure," to "behold the Father's Face,[e]" to read therein His Divine, Blessed Will, to do It. It is the misery of devils and of the damned, eternally to will what God willeth not, not to will what He willeth. When all else is decayed, and turned iuto death, the will lives yet. God is the Life of the soul, and when He leaveth it, it is dead. The will cannot die. In the dead soul there is a living will, even if it live to choose what is its death. The will may be changed, but it can be changed only into another will. It cannot cease to be. If it will what God wills, it is good; the soul which so willeth, passeth, as it were, into God, and becomes one with Him, not in nature, but in mind; yet so great that oneness, that some misbelievers of old, who even worshipped our Lord, the Co-eternal Son of God, could yet think that He was One with the Father, not by Nature, but by Will.[f] If the will is subject to God, man becometh God's, and God willeth what He willeth, yea, subjecteth in a manner His Own Almighty Will to man's. He willeth that we pray to Him; He willeth to do what we pray Him, but only if we will to ask Him. He giveth us a good will, upholdeth that will, but so giveth us power over His Own Almightiness, and willeth to do what we desire of Him. If we receive His Grace, and will to have His Love, and His In-dwelling, that He should come down from Heaven into our hearts, that our Lord should give us His Body and His Blood, He too willeth it, and doth what we will. We cannot tell, how the Unchangeable, All-Foreseeing God, can hear our prayers,

[d] "Let self-will cease, and hell will not be. For against whom will that fire rage, save self-will?"—S. Bern. Temp. Pasch. S. 3. § 3.

[e] Ps. ciii. 21; S. Matt. xviii. 10.

[f] The Arians. See S. Athanas. on the Counc. Arian, and Seleuc. c. 2. § 23. p. 107. Oxf. Tr. and note f. c. 3. § 16 p. 145. § 19. p. 148. p. 155. n. g. against the Arians, iii. 25. p. 414. and n. b. on their worship of Him, see Ib. i. 3 2. p 191. and n. d. i. 6. 3. p. 206. ii. 15, 6. p. 301. and n. c. and iii. 25. 10. p. 423. and notes m. n.

and how His Own Dealings towards us can depend upon our will; yet we know that He doth hear prayer, willeth that we should will what is for His Glory and for the good of our souls, and doth what we, with a whole will, according to His Will, ask Him. He vouchsafeth to follow, as it were, the will of man. He indeed foreknoweth in His Eternity all His Works; He "loveth" His own "with an Everlasting Love,[g]" without beginning and without end; He foreknoweth His Own Love in time, His Grace in us, and our use of It. Yet, in act, He vouchsafeth to follow, as it were, our acceptance of His Grace, and our prayers, and doth what, without us, He would not have done. "The Lord hearkened," saith Joshua, "to the voice of a man;[h]" and sun and moon stood still in their courses, at the command of faith. Each prayer of faith worketh miracles. The soul willing, according to the Will of God, God willeth what she willeth, and doth for her, or for others, what she willeth, and what, but for her will inspired and taught by Him, He had not done.

Aweful in its bliss, more aweful yet is the will in its decay. Aweful power it is to be *able* for ourselves to choose God; terrible to be able to refuse Him. We have felt, many of us, the strangeness of the power of will in children; how neither present strength, nor persuasion, nor love, nor hope, nor pain, nor punishment, nor dread of worse, nor weight of authority, can, for a time, bend the determined will of a little child. We are amazed to see a power so strong in a frame so slight, and a mind so childish. Yet they are faint pictures of ourselves, whenever we have sinned wilfully. We marvel at their resisting our wisdom, knowledge, strength, counsel, authority, persuasiveness. What is every wilful sin but a resistance of the Wisdom, Power, Counsel, Majesty, Eloquent Pleadings of Almighty God in the sinner's soul? What is it, but for the soul which He hath made, to will to thwart His Counsel Who hath made it, to mar His Work, to accuse His Wisdom of foolishness, His Love of want of tenderness, to withdraw

[g] Jer. xxxi. 3. [h] Josh. x. 14.

itself from the Dominion of God, be another god to itself, a separate principle of wisdom, and source of happiness, and Providence to itself, to order things in its own way, setting before itself and working out its own ends, making self-love, self-exaltation, self-gratification its object, as though it were at its will to shape its own lot as much as if there were no God. Yea, and at last, it must *will* that there be no God. And, in its worst decay, it accomplishes what it wills, and (aweful as it is to say) blots God out of its creation, disbelieving that He is, or will do as He has said, or that He will avenge. Whoever wills what God wills not, so far dethrones God, and set up his own will to dispute the Almightiness and Wisdom of the Eternal God. He is a Deicide. It matters not wherein the self-will is exerted, in the very least things or the greatest. Anti-Christ will be but the full unhindered growth of self-will. "Even now," says the beloved Disciple,[i] "there are many Anti-Christs." Whoso would knowingly and habitually set himself against the Will of God, to him power only, not will, is wanting, to be altogether Anti-Christ. Good and evil are measured not by their subjects, but by their objects. The cup of cold water may gain a brighter reward than "large gifts out of abundance;" sins about seemingly small things may bring the same damnation as those which fill the world with misery. "What measure," saith a holy man,[k] "doth man's desire set itself? Would not he who through usury gaineth a little money, in like way attempt to gain the whole world, if it were possible, if power were not wanting to the will? I say confidently, the whole world would not suffice one who is in the power of self-will. Yea, would that he were contented even therewith, and (fearful to say,) raged not against its Creator! But now, (as far as in it lies,) self-will destroys God Himself. For it would that God could not, or willed not to, avenge its sins, or knew them not. It willeth then that God were not, which, as far as in it lies, willeth that He were either powerless, or unjust, or unwise. Cruel truly and accursed wickedness

[i] 1. S. John ii. 18. [k] S. Bern. l. c.

which wisheth that the Power, Justice, Wisdom of God were not."

Such was the deep disease of self-will, to cure which our Good Lord came, in our nature, to fulfil the Father's Will, to will to suffer what the Father willed, to "empty Himself and become obedient unto death, and that the Death of the Cross.[l]" Such is the aweful nature of that power within us, "the Image of God, which had as it were a sort of substantive image of the Eternal and Incomprehensible Divinity impressed upon it;" "which had indeed a beginning, but which hath no end," which cannot perish, "which receiveth no increase," the same holy man hath said,[m] "from righteousness or glory, no loss from sin and misery. What can be more like Eternity, which is not Eternity?" "It is neither greater in the righteous than in the sinner, nor fuller in an Angel than in man. For as the consent of the human will, being turned by Grace to good, thereby maketh man freely good, and in good free, in that it is formed voluntarily, not dragged against its will; so when that consent of the will is of its own accord sunk down into ill, it doth not the less constitute him free and a voluntary agent in ill, in that he is led by his own will, not compelled from without to be evil. And as an Angel of Heaven, or even God Himself, remains freely Good, namely, by His Own Will, not through any necessity from without; so the devil, equally free, fell headlong into, and persists in evil, namely, by his own voluntary assent, not by any impulse from without. The liberty of the will then remains, even where the mind is captive; as complete in the evil as in the good, as entire also, in its measure, in the creature as in the Creator, although in Him more Powerful.[n]" By the fall, man's will lost the wisdom and power wherewith God endowed it. It could not cease to be. Perfect it was in the Ever-Blessed Son of God, as Man, Whose "meat and drink it was to do the Will of His Father.[o]" In Him it was One with the Will of the Father, Whose Will God the

[l] Phil. ii. 8.
[m] S. Bern. de grat. et lib. arb. c. ix. § 28.
[n] Ib. c. iv. § 9.
[o] S. John iv. 34.

Son is.[p] Perfect bliss is it in the Man Christ Jesus, in Whom without effort, without constraint, It had its everlasting rest in the Will of the Father, ever co-existing, and One with It, and having Its Good Pleasure in It. Perfect misery is it in Satan and in the damned, in whom, with unimpaired strength of will, in everlasting hate of God, powerless except to hate, it liveth on, unceasingly rebelling against His Righteous Will, and by its rebellion miserable. "Woe," saith the same holy man, "Woe to the opposed wills, whose only gain is the punishment of their aversion! What so penal as ever to will what shall never be? What so damned, as a will given over to this necessity of willing and not willing, so as in both, to will and not will only perversely, only with misery? For ever shall it not obtain what it willeth, and what it willeth not, still for ever shall it endure.[q]"

And since pride was the chief source of disease in our corrupted wills, to heal this, came as now from His Everlasting Glory, the Eternal Son of God, and, as a Little Child, fulfilled His Father's Will. He could not, though in Form a Little Child, cease to will the Will of God, since although He took our Human Nature perfectly, Soul and Body, His Person, whereunto He took our Human Nature, was not human but Divine. He was born because He willed. "For this cause," He saith,[r] "I came into the world." He was

[p] See note I. on Tertullian, p. 324.—6, Oxf. Tr. and S. Athan. against the Arians, ii. 18. 1. p. 324, and note c. p. 443. note f. iii. 30. 7, p. 490, 1. notes m. n.

[q] De consid. v. 12.

[r] S. John xviii. 37. "He was sent, but as Man, (for He was of twofold Nature), since He was weary also, and an hungred, and athirst, and in an Agony, and wept, by the law of the body. But if as God, what meaneth it? His Mission was the Good Pleasure of The Father, to Whom He refers all that is His, both honouring Him, as The Eternal Cause, and also that He may not seem opposed to God. Since He is said also to have been delivered up, and to have delivered up Himself, and to have been raised by The Father, and received up, but also to have raised Himself, and ascended again. The one is said of Good Pleasure, the other of Power." S. Greg. Naz. Orat. 38. § 15. "The Father Alone is not said to be Sent, because He Alone hath none by whom He was Begotten, or from whom He proceedeth, and so not for any difference of Nature, Which in the Trinity is none, but on account of His Original, The Father Alone is not said to be Sent, for the brightness and heat do not send forth the fire, but the fire sendeth whether it be brightness or heat." S. Aug. con. Ser. Arian, c. 4. "In the Word of God Himself, Which was in the be-

not sent only as we, but, of His Own Will, to do His Father's Will, He "came." Of His Own Will, on this day, He subjected Himself to the Righteous Law of God, and while He paid the penalty of the "likeness of sinful flesh" wherein, without sin, He came, He began to pay the Ransom of our transgressions, being obedient to the law, to the Shedding of His Blood for us. He was circumcised and became "Obedient unto the law for man," to "redeem us from the curse of the law." He became Obedient, not only to His Father, with Whom as God He was Co-Equal, but as man to the creatures, His earthly mother and his reputed father, whom, as God, He created for Himself. He began to hallow obedience to parents, "the first commandment with promise," by subjecting His Own Will to theirs. He spake not with authority, until He had given the example of obedience. He commanded unclean spirits and they obeyed Him; yet having been "subject to His parents." He seemed to begin His Ministry when twelve years old, already awakening the wonder of the doctors of the law "by His Understanding and Answers," only to lay it aside for eighteen years,[8] after "His parents had sought Him sorrowing."

ginning with God, and was God, in the Wisdom of God Itself, without all time was it, at what time He should appear in the Flesh; so then, since without any beginning of time, the Word was in the beginning, and was with God and was God, without any time was it in the Word Itself, at what time the Word should become Flesh and dwell among us. Which fulness of time, when it had come, God sent His Son, made of a woman, that is, made in time, that the Incarnate Word might appear to man, which was in the Word Itself without time, at what time it should be. For the order of times in the Eternal Wisdom of God is without time. Since, then, this was wrought by The Father and The Son, that The Son appeared in the Flesh, He is fittingly said to be Sent Who appeared in the Flesh, and He to have sent Who did not appear in it." Id. de Trin. ii. § 9,; who also quotes in illustration, Rom. viii. 32. Gal. ii. 20.; where The Father is said to have delivered up The Son, and The Son to have delivered up Himself; and S. John x. 36.; xvii. 19.; where The Father is said to have sanctified our Lord, and He to sanctify Himself, "because the Will of The Father and The Son is One, and Their Operation Inseparable. So then, the Incarnation and Birth of a Virgin, in which the Son is understood as Sent, was wrought by One and the Same Operation of The Father and The Son Inseparably, The Holy Ghost not being separated therefrom, of Whom it is said, 'She was found with Child of the Holy Ghost.'" See further in Petav. de Trin. viii. 1.

[8] "Where can this leprosy [of self-will] be cleansed except in Jordan? Immerse thyself there, whoever hast it, and consider what 'the Angel of Great Counsel' did, how He subjected His Own Counsel to the counsel of one woman, (I mean the

He disclosed to them, that He must "be about His Father's Business," and then "went down to Nazareth, and was subject unto them," and so hid Himself, that when He again appeared in Wisdom and Power, men again "marvelled, Whence hath this Man letters, having never learned?[t]"

And when He entered on His Ministry, the Will of His Father was the full Contentment, Refreshment, Stay, Reward, of His Soul, as Man. What to us men are our meat and drink, the repairs of the daily decay of nature, the medicine of our weariness, the staff of our life, a reward of our toils, that to Him was His Father's Will; "My meat is to do the Will of Him that sent Me, and to finish His Work.[u]" This was the one end of His Life on earth, for the Salvation of those whom His Father should give Him. "I came down from Heaven, not to do Mine Own Will, but the Will of Him that sent Me. And this is the Father's Will Which hath sent Me, that of all which He hath given Me, I should lose nothing.[x]" By virtue of this alone, doth He pronounce judgment on the unbelieving world, "My Judgment is just, because I seek not Mine Own Will, but the Will of My Father which hath sent Me.[y]" In this, just before His Passion, He sums up His Life on earth, "I have glorified Thee on earth; I have finished the Work which Thou gavest Me to do.[z]" In this He breathed out His Spirit; "Jesus knowing that all things were now accomplished, that the Scripture might be fulfilled, saith, 'I thirst.'" "When Jesus then had received the vinegar, He

Blessed Virgin), and a poor carpenter, which is Joseph. For being found in the midst of the Doctors, hearing them and asking them questions, He was, in a manner rebuked by His mother, 'Son, why hast Thou thus dealt with us?' But He said, 'How is it that ye sought Me? Wist ye not that I must be about My Father's Business? And they understood not this Saying.' And what did the Word? He was not understood in Himself. He came down so as to be subject unto them. Who would not now be ashamed to be obstinate in his own counsel, when Wisdom Itself gave up His? He so changed His Counsel, that what He had then already begun, He wholly laid aside thenceforth, even to the thirtieth year of His Age. For thou findest nothing of His Doctrine or Deeds from this twelfth year to the thirtieth." S. Bern. Serm. iii. Temp. Pasch. § 4.

[t] S. John vii. 15. [u] Ib. iv. 34. [x] Ib. vi. 38, 39.
[y] Ib. v. 30. [z] Ib. xvii. 4.

said, 'It is finished;' and He bowed His Head, and gave up the ghost.[a]"

Such was the Oneness with His Father's Will, as on this day foredated in suffering, which for us men and for our Salvation He wrought; for us, as our Example, He pourtrayed. And herein, besides that perfect fulfilment of the Will of God, He seemeth to tell us how to learn it; by filial obedience; by willing suffering (as in His Circumcision on this day); and so at last by active doing of the Will of God. For "the first commandment with promise[b]" hath this special blessing, that they who, with childlike piety and reverence, honour and obey father or mother, rarely go far astray from the Will of God, or are soon recalled to It, as parents are to us in the stead of God. And then, whereas the Will of God is done either *by* us, in active obedience, or *on* us and *in* us, by passive obedience or resignation in suffering; to *suffer* the Will of God is the surest, deepest, safest way to learn to *do* it. For it has least of self. It needeth only to be still, and it reposeth at once in the Loving Will of God. If we have crippled ourselves, and cannot do great things, we can, at least, meekly bear chastening, hush our souls and be still. It seems simple and plain at once. It is but to own that God ordereth all things righteously, and all which is righteous, and overruleth to His Righteous Ends all man's unrighteousness, and so to accept all at once, even man's perverseness, from the Almighty Hand of God. It is but to believe that nothing is so slight as to escape God's Perfect Knowledge; that His Wisdom ruleth over all, appointeth all; and so to submit itself to all. All which is contrary to man's natural will belongs to it. We unlearn self-will, by receiving all patiently, which crosses self. Our first rebellion, our first going astray from God, was to will for ourselves, what God willed not; our first return, to receive what we will not, because God willeth it. So were we, as children, corrected by our earthly parents, to suffer what we would not, when we willed what we should not. So is our self-will corrected by our Heavenly Father. We willed

[a] S. John xix. 28.

[b] Eph. vi. 2.

what was against His Righteous Will, and went astray, to perish. Will we now what is His Will, though against our's, and we shall live. Such is His Love, the very acceptance of our just chastisement is the first step of the life of Saints, and of the bliss of Angels. Eli said, "It is the Lord, let Him do what seemeth Him good,[c]" and the Spirit of God sealed his words as the pattern of saintly resignation. David said of Shimei, "Let him curse, for the Lord hath said unto him, Curse David;[c]" and he who was bearing the penalty of his two-fold, most grievous, deadly sin, became the image of the Christ of God, Who, without sin, "bare the contradiction of sinners against Himself."

Yet, since in trials of this sort, the soul is often perplexed by its very suffering, it may be for your rest, when ye shall be called to God's loving Discipline of suffering, to have such simple rules as these:—

1. It is not against the Will of God, even strongly to will, if it should be His Will, what yet may prove not to be His Will. Entire submission to the Will of God requireth absolutely these two things. Wholly will whatsoever thou knowest God to will; wholly reject whatsoever thou knowest God willeth not. Beyond these two, while the Will of God is as yet not clear unto thee, thou art free. We must indeed, in all our prayers, have written, at least, in our hearts, those words spoken by our Dear Lord for us, "Not as I will, but as Thou." We shall, in whatever degree God hath conformed our will to His, hold our will in suspense, even while yet uncertain, ready to follow the Balance of His Gracious Will, even while we tremblingly watch its motions, and our dearest earthly hopes, laid therein, seem ready gradually to sink, for the rest of this life, in the dust. David[e] fasted, and lay all night upon the earth, and prayed earnestly for the child of his great sin; "Who can tell whether God will be gracious to me, that the child may live?" When the child was dead, he arose from the earth and worshipped, his heart wholly one with the Will of God. Abraham,[f] for Lot's sake, pleaded earnestly for Sodom, and be-

[c] 1 Sam. iii. 18. [d] 2 Sam. xvi. 10. [e] Ib. xii. 15—23. [f] Gen. xviii. 23—33.

came the image of the Intercession of our Lord for the world sunken in wickedness, though the righteous Lot only was, at his prayer, delivered from the overthrow. St. Paul "called God to witness, that he had great heaviness, and continual sorrow in his heart, and could wish that himself were accursed from Christ for his brethren,[g]" and was heard for "the remnant according to the election of Grace," even while "the rest," for whose salvation he longed, "were blinded." The Prophets and righteous men of old, "earnestly[h] desired to see the things which" afterwards the Apostles "saw," even Christ come in the Flesh; and although they "received not the Promise,[i]" they obtained as their reward, to "see them afar off, and be persuaded of them, and embrace them." The souls under the Altar cry, "How long, O Lord, Holy and True, dost Thou not avenge our blood on them that dwell on the earth?" and though their longing for the final consummation in bliss is not yet given them, "White robes are given to every one of them, and it was said to them, that they should rest for a little season.[k]" The very "Angels desire to look into" the full mystery of "the Sufferings of Christ,[l]" and although as yet they see It not wholly, since they still desire it, and all Its Fruits are not yet seen, nor are their ranks, broken by the apostate Angels' fall, yet filled up, nor "all enemies put under the Feet" of their King, nor (aweful as it is to say) "God is" yet "all in all,[m]" yet have they an increase of bliss in singing Him, the Lord of Hosts, the King of Glory, or as now, "Glory to God in the Highest, and on earth Peace, Goodwill towards men.[n]" And our Lord teacheth His Church to pray, "Thy Kingdom come," although, these eighteen hundred years, His Kingdom has still been ever coming, but is as yet only partially come. All these desired or desire God's Will; and all, for their earnest desires' sake, were or are heard, although in part only, according to the Will of God, which they too willed.

[g] Rom. ix. 1—3; xi. 5—7.
[h] S. Luke x. 24.
[i] Heb. xi. 39, 13.
[k] Rev. vi. 9—11.
[l] 1 St. Pet. i. 12, 11.
[m] 1 Cor. xv. 28.
[n] S. Luke ii. 14.

And so thou too, whatever it be which thou willest, the health and life of those thou lovest as thine own soul, the turning aside of any threatened Scourge of God, the healing of thine aching heart, the cleansing away of harassing thoughts or doubts entailed upon thee by former sin, or of coldness, or dryness, or distraction in prayer, or deadness of soul, or absence of spiritual consolation, thou mayest without fear ask it of God with thy whole heart, and will it wholly and earnestly, so that thou will therein the Glory of God, and, though with sinking heart, welcome the Will of God when thou knowest assuredly what that Will is.

2. Nor again is it against the Will of God that thou art bowed down and grieved by what is the Will of God. How can we but weep, and have sorrow of heart, when, if it be for our own sins and the sins of our people, the Ark, the Church of God, is sorely shaken, and the hearts of men are perplexed, and the Work of God is hindered, and, if so be, the State becomes indifferent to truth, and prepares for a final apostacy, and admits aliens[o] to rule over her? How can the hearts of those who fear the Lord but sink, when the "love of" Him is "waxed cold,[p]" and well-nigh "all flesh corrupteth its way upon the earth,[q]" and our cities, instead of nurseries for Heaven, seem seed-plots for hell, and the Church cries to God, yet seems to be heard, like Abraham, but for few? Such heaviness is according to the Will of God, Who "willeth all men to be saved, and come to the knowledge of the Truth.[r]"

And even when the heaviness is for our own private griefs, yet, if it be patient, it too is according to the Will of God. For God hath made us such as to suffer. He willeth that suffering be the healthful chastisement of our sins. And yet, in a manner, it is against His Will that we suffer, "For He doth not afflict willingly, nor grieve the children of men.[s]" Let us too, while we grieve, will it and will it not; will that we had not needed it, yet, since we needed it, will to have it.

[o] Said in reference to the proposed un-Christianizing of the Legislature, by the admission of Jews into it, 1848.

[p] Matt. xxiv. 12. [q] Gen. vi. 12. [r] 1 Tim. ii. 4. [s] Lam. iii. 33.

Our grief, if still and humble, yea, even though with broken heart and dimmed eyes, thankful for His Severe Love, is according to His Will. For had we not grief, we should not have suffering, and without suffering there were no healing. We may then be bowed down by heaviness, so that we "humble ourselves under the Mighty Hand of God;[t]" we may grieve, so that we pour out our grief into His Fatherly Bosom, and "with" our "tears wash" our Tender Saviour's "Feet."

3. Then, whatever thy grief or trouble be, take every drop in thy cup from the Hand of Almighty God. Thou knowest well that all comes from God, ordered or overruled by Him. How was the Cup of Thy Lord filled which He drank for thee? All was of God; all but this day's Suffering, and that Mysterious Forsaking on the Cross, came through man. Through the contempt of man, was His Virgin-Mother thrust aside, and He laid in His Manger-Bed. Through the neglect of man, "He had not where to lay His Head." Through man was Satan's malice vented upon His Sacred Head; through man's hatred for His Love must He hide Himself, "because His Hour," the hour of Suffering, "was not yet come.[u]" Prophecy foretold His Death; the Father "gave His Only-Begotten Son" for us; He Himself "poured out His Soul to death;[x]" yet through man was He blasphemed, through man spit upon, buffetted, scourged, nailed, crucified, as by man He is now "crucified afresh." And should we be amazed, if we be "called" by the world "Beelzebub?" Is it not rather a mark that we are "of His Household?"

4. Again, no trouble is too small, wherein to see the Will of God for thee. Great troubles come but seldom. Daily fretting trials, that is, what of thyself would fret thee, may often, in God's Hands, conform thee more to His Gracious Will. They are the daily touches, whereby He traces on thee the Likeness of His Divine Will. There is nothing too slight, wherein to practice Oneness with the Will of God. Then should we be per-

[t] 1 St. Pet. v. 6. [u] S. John viii. 20, 59; xi. 54; xii. 36. [x] Is. liii. 12.

fected in that Will, when we were like children in our Father's Arms, moved and carried as He willed, and yielding ourselves to Their Every Motion; "like the weaned child on its mother's breast,[y]" stilled to our own desires, even when within their very reach. Yet this is attained, through God's Grace, by daily use. By daily practice in little things, are our senses exercised, our limbs nerved, our skill perfected. By daily practice in slight crosses of our own will, do we learn the lesson our Lord taught, "Not as I will, but as Thou." All the things whereof men daily complain, may perfect thee in the Will of God. The changes of the seasons, bodily discomforts or ailments, rude words, petty slights, little jealousies, unevenness of temper in those with whom thou livest, misunderstandings, censures of thy faith or practice, severe judgments, thanklessness of those thou wouldest benefit, interruptions in what thou wouldest do, oppressiveness or distraction of thy labours; whatever thou canst think of, wherein others fret themselves, and still more, thyself; therein thou seest, how to be of one will with God. It is part of the Faith that, since nothing is of chance, He, "without Whom not a sparrow falleth to the ground," appointeth each slightest accident of thy life. He with Whom "the hairs of thy head are all numbered," knoweth every throb of thy brow, each hardly drawn breath, each shoot of pain, each beating of the fevered pulse, each sinking of the aching heart. Receive then, what are trials to *thee*, not in the main only, but one by one, from His All-loving Hands; thank His Love for each; unite each with the Sufferings of thy Redeemer; pray that He will thereby hallow them to thee. Thou wilt not know now what He thereby will work in thee; yet, day by day, shalt thou receive the impress of the Likeness of the Ever-blessed Son, and in thee too, while thou knowest it not, God shall "be glorified," yea, and "shall glorify thee."

My brethren, your presence here, this day, bears witness that ye wish to hallow this coming year to God, to will whatsoever ye know that He willeth, not to will what He

[y] Psalm cxxxi. 2.

willeth not. Ye would from your inmost hearts desire, by God's Grace, to part with your heart's dearest wish, sooner than part with the Will of God, that is, with Christ. At least, your will, I trust, is right with God, and ye hate in yourselves what God disapproves, even, if through infirmity of nature, ye are, at times, surprised; or the force of former evil habit still draws you down. If ye have not yet a right will or have but a half will, pray Him to give you a whole upright will; if it be upright but weak, pray Him for a strong will; if strong yet not fervent, pray Him for a devoted will, so shall He at length perfect your will in His Blessed Everlasting Peace, where Angels and Saints ever perfectly fulfil His Blessed Will, and therein have their pleasure.[z]

Think what is your exchange! What give ye up? Your

[z] "The first step in this way is a right will, the second a strong will, the third a devoted, the fourth a full will. In the first degree, the soul consenteth in mind to the Law of God, but, the flesh rebelling, doth not find how to perform the good it loveth, but, through infirmity, often doth the ill it hateth. Yet in this its will is right, that, 'agreeing with its adversary,' it hateth in itself what he censureth. In the second degree, the soul not only doth not do the ill it hateth, but even performeth the good it loveth, although heavily, yet firmly; saying with the Prophet, through the Words of Thy Lips, I have kept me from the ways of the Destroyer.' In the third degree, it now with expanded heart, 'runneth the ways of God's Commandments, and is delighted in them, as in all manner of riches,' because being anointed with the Oil of spiritual Grace, and knowing that God 'loveth a cheerful giver,' stretching itself forth with gladness to all good, it crieth with the Prophet David, 'I will run the way of Thy Commandments, when Thou hast set my heart at liberty.' In the fourth degree, are the Angels who with that ease, wherewith they ever will what is good, fully perform it. This degree the soul can indeed long for, but cannot mount up to while in the body, because it is weighed down by the body. Whoso hath as yet not a right will, let him know that a carnal intention hinders him. Whoso hath a right and not a strong will, let him know that evil habits hinder him. Whoso hath a devoted and not a perfect will, let him know that his earthly habitation hindereth him. Whose will is still vicious, let him pray, and say, 'Thy Will be done in earth, as It is in Heaven,' understanding himself as earth, and him who hath a right will, as Heaven; for as far as Heaven differeth from earth, so far doth a right differ from a vicious will. So let him pray who hath a right but not a strong will, understanding himself as earth, but him whose will is now strong, as Heaven. And so as to the rest, that the soul ever be careful to make progress, because as he is condemned who abideth in a vicious will, so he is blame-worthy who studieth not to make progress in the rest."—S. Bern. Serm. 124. de Divers. § 2. In this fourfold division, S. Bernard follows S. Augustine of the fourfold condition of man, before the law, under the law, under grace, in the blessed and everlasting peace of eternal life.—See Enchirid. § 120. S. Aug. Short Treatises, p. 155, 6. Oxf. Tr. and de quæstt. 83. qu. 66. § 3, &c.

own blind self-will, whereby ye have been held enslaved, the iron yoke of evil custom and of habit, bowing you down to earthly things! And what receive ye? Freedom of will with God. To will what His Boundless Wisdom willeth, to love what His Endless Love loveth. Love or hate are the strength of will; love, of the Will of God; hate, of the will of devils. A weak love is a weak will; a strong love is a strong will.[a] Self-will is the antagonist of the Will of God; for thou wert formed for God. If thou wert made for thyself, be self thy centre; if for God, repose thyself in the Will of God. So shalt thou lose thy self-will, to find thy better will in God, and thy self-love shall be absorbed in the Love of God. Yea, thou shalt love thyself, because God hath loved thee; take care for thyself, because thou art not thine own, but God careth for thee; will thine own good, because and as God willeth it.

[a] He who "willeth" to do the Commandment of God, and cannot, hath indeed already a good will, but as yet a small and weak one: but he will be able when he shall have a great and strong one. For when the martyrs fulfilled those great Commandments, they did it by a great will, that is, by great love. Of which the Lord Himself speaks, 'Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends.' Whence also the Apostle saith, 'He who loveth his neighbour, hath fulfilled the Law,' &c. Rom. xiii. 8—10. This love the Apostle Peter as yet had not, when, through fear, he thrice denied the Lord. 'For there is no fear in love,' as John the Evangelist saith in his Epistle, 'but perfect love casteth out fear.' And yet although small and imperfect, it was not wanting when he said to the Lord, 'I will lay down my life for Thy Sake;' for he thought that he could, what he felt that he would. And Who had begun to give that love, although small, save He Who prepareth the will, and co-operating perfecteth what, operating, He beginneth? For He Himself beginning, worketh in us that we should will, Who, perfecting, co-worketh with us, when we will. For which cause the Apostle saith, 'Being confident of this very thing, that He Which hath begun a good work in you, will perform it until the Day of Jesus Christ.' (Phil. i. 6.) That then we should will, He worketh without us; but when we will, and so will as to do, He worketh with us; yet without Him either working that we should will, or co-working when we will, we have no power for good works of piety. Of His Working that we may will it is said, 'For it is God Who worketh in you both to will.' But of His co-working, when we already will, and willing do, He saith, 'We know that all things work together for good to those who love God.' What are 'all things' save those very terrible and cruel sufferings? For that Burden of Christ which is heavy to weakness is made light to love. For to such the Lord said, that 'His Burden was light,' such as Peter was when he suffered for Christ, not such as he was when he denied Christ. Such love, that is, a will wholly on fire with Divine Love, the Apostle commending saith, 'Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall tribulation,'" &c. S. Aug. de grat. et lib. arbitr. c. 17.

"Father, nevertheless not as I Will, but as Thou." So hath our Lord sanctified all the natural shrinkings of our lower will. He vouchsafed to allow the natural Will of His Sacred Manhood to be "amazed and very heavy" at the Mysterious Sufferings of the Cross, to hallow the "mute shrinking[b]" of ours, and guide us on to His All-Holy Submission of His Will. It is a great Word which He lets us take into our mouths, "not what I, but what Thou." *I* and *Thou* stand, as it were, over against each other. *I*, this worm of earth, yet endowed with what even God will not break, that fearful Gift, the Will; *Thou*, the Fountain of Love, of Wisdom, Overflowing Goodness. *I*, who am nothing; *Thou*, Who Alone Art. Give but thy will to God, and *I* and *Thou* become one. Choose but the Will of God, and thou willest with His Wisdom, thou choosest with His All-Perfect Choice; thou enterest into His Counsels; thou lovest with His Love.

Be this our watchword, brethren, for this year, for the Church, for those we love, for our own souls. Be this our rule in action, "not what I will, but what Thou;" this, in suffering, "not what I, but what Thou." This shall hallow our hopes; this shall hush our fears; this shall ward off disquiet; this shall still our displeasure; this shall preserve our peace; this shall calm anxieties; this (if so it must be) shall soothe our heart-aches; this shall give repose to our weariness; this (the deeper our trouble) shall be the deeper foretaste of Everlasting Peace and Rest. For it shall "transfuse our will into His Supreme Good Pleasure,[c]" and we shall be "the friends of God;[d]" for friends have but one will; yea, we shall be changed into "one Spirit with" Him, sinking our own bounded will in His, receiving into ourselves His Almighty Will.

Pray we, with our good Bishop,[e] "Lord, Thou knowest and canst, and willest what is best for my soul; I, wretched

[b] See S. Aug. Conf. viii. § 18. p. 127. Oxf. Tr.

[c] Paradise of the Christian Soul, Pt. i. "Act of Resignation towards God," p. 80, Cleaver.

[d] S. John xv. 14.

[e] Bp. Andrewes' Devotions. Deprecations, p. 77. Tracts for the Times, No. 88.

man that I am, neither know, nor can, nor, as I ought, will it; do Thou, O Lord, of Thine Unspeakable Goodness, so order and dispose of me as seemeth good to Thee, and as is best for me;" and His Goodness is pledged to provide for thee, His Wisdom to counsel for thee, His Power to uphold thee, His Love to receive thee. "Lord, not what I will, but what Thou;" not what I, in my misery, and ignorance, and blindness, and sin, but what Thou, in Thy Mercy, and Holiness, and Wisdom, and Love. "For what were it but Life Eternal, with our whole affections, to follow, in all things, the Will of God?[f]"

[f] "This that I said, let him keep his will in suspense, or subject his own will to the Divine Will, I speak not of the concupiscences of the desires, not of the affections. For that is impossible while the soul is yet detained in this body of sin, in 'this body of death.' For what else were it but Life Eternal, with our whole affections to follow in all things the Will of God? But it is necessary that we subject our own consent to the Divine Will, if we desire to have Eternal or present Peace, as it is written, 'My Peace I give unto you, My Peace I leave with you.' 'Oh Lord,' saith the Prophet, 'they shall walk in the Light of Thy Countenance, and in Thy Name shall they exult all the day long.' For one walketh in the light of his own countenance, anxious to do his own will, and considering the good pleasure of his own heart. Another walketh in the light of man's countenance, ever intent on what pleaseth man, what the world judgeth. 'Destruction and unhappiness is in their ways, and the way of peace have they not known, for there is no fear of God before their eyes.' For he who hath the fear of God ever before his eyes, 'his ways are ways of pleasure, and all his paths are Peace.' 'Come unto Me,' He saith, 'all ye that labour, and are heavy laden,' whom the hard slavery of your own or another's will oppresseth, 'and ye shall find rest for your souls. For My Yoke is easy, and My Burden is light.' For by how much the Divine Clemency is more loving and sweeter than any man, by so much it is plain that His Yoke is sweeter than all other burdens. Wherefore men who study to please themselves or other men, are 'brought to confusion;' but they who walk 'in the Light of Thy Countenance, O Lord,' thinking only of this, how they should do Thy Will, and striving with their whole heart to please Thee, shall now exult in Thy Name, 'all the day long,' and shall have no occasion of falling, and at last shall be exalted in Thy Righteousness, when laying aside their own infirmities 'and entering into Thy Strength,' they 'shall make mention of Thy Righteousness only,' and then without toil possess that Will which now they toil to follow." S. Bern. de Divers. Serm. 26. § 4.

Thanks be to God.

Printed by Alex. Ambrose Masson, Littlemore.

BY THE SAME AUTHOR.

I. REMARKS on the Prospective and Past Benefits of CATHEDRAL INSTITUTIONS, in the Promotion of Sound Religious Knowledge and of Clerical Education. Second Edition. 1833. 6s.

II. SCRIPTURAL VIEW of HOLY BAPTISM, as established by the consent of the Ancient Church and contrasted with the Systems of Modern Schools. Third Edition, enlarged. 1st Part. 5s.

Copies may still be had of the additional Notes to the first edition of Tracts 67—69 on Holy Baptism.

III. THOUGHTS on the BENEFITS of FASTING. Third Edition. (Tracts for the Times, Nos. 18 and 66.) 6d.

IV. A SERMON, preached at the Consecration of Grove Church.

V. CHURCHES in LONDON, with an Appendix. 6d.

VI. EARNEST REMONSTRANCE to the Author of "A Pastoral Epistle from his Holiness the Pope," on the Danger of Ridicule in Religion. Reprinted in Tracts for the Times, Vol. 3. 6d.

VII. A LETTER to the Right Rev. Father in God, RICHD. LORD BISHOP of OXFORD. Fourth Edition. With a Preface on the Doctrine of Justification. *(Sold separately).* 6s.

VIII. The ARTICLES treated on in TRACT 90 Reconsidered and their Interpretation Vindicated. LETTER to the Rev. Dr. JELF. With an Appendix from Archbishop Ussher on the Difference between Ancient and Modern Addresses to Saints. Second Edition. 5s.

IX. A LETTER on the Proposed Change in the Laws PROHIBITING MARRIAGE between those NEAR of KIN. Reprinted from the British Magazine, November, 1840. 6d.

X. A LETTER to His Grace the ARCHBISHOP of CANTERBURY, on some circumstances connected with the present crisis in the ENGLISH CHURCH. Fourth Edition. 1842. 4s.

XI. PATIENCE and CONFIDENCE the STRENGTH of the CHURCH. Third Edition, with three Appendices. 1841. 3s.

XII. The CHURCH the CONVERTER of the HEATHEN. Two SERMONS, 1838; with copious notes. 12mo. Third Edition. 6d.

XIII. CHRIST, the SOURCE and RULE of CHRISTIAN LOVE. With a Preface on the Relation of our Exertions to our Needs. 1s. 6d.

XIV. The PREACHING of the GOSPEL a PREPARATION for our LORD'S COMING. 1841. 1s.

XV. GOD IS LOVE. WHOSO RECEIVETH ONE

SUCH LITTLE CHILD IN MY NAME, RECEIVETH ME. Two Sermons, 1846. 1s. 6d.

XVI. The DAY of JUDGMENT. 1839. Second Edit. 6d.

XVII. The HOLY EUCHARIST, a COMFORT for the PENITENT. 1843. 1s. 6d.

XVIII. ENTIRE ABSOLUTION of the PENITENT. 1846. TWO SERMONS. 1s. 6d. and 1s.

XIX. CHASTISEMENTS NEGLECTED, FORERUNNERS of GREATER, on the General Fast Day, 1847.

XX. The BLASPHEMY AGAINST the HOLY GHOST. 1845. 1s.

XXI. ELEVEN SERMONS Preached at the CONSECRATION of St. SAVIOUR'S, LEEDS, 1845. Together with SERMONS by the Rev. J. KEBLE, Rev. Is. WILLIAMS, Rev. W. DODSWORTH, Rev. C. MARRIOTT, Rev. W. U. RICHARDS. 7s. 6d.

XXII. CONFESSIONS of S. AUGUSTINE. Second Edit. Old Translation revised.

XXIII. Also the LATIN ORIGINAL, with renewed collations of MSS. and illustrated from himself. 9s.

XXIV. CATALOGUS CODD. MSS. ARAB. Bibl. Bodl. ab. ALEX. NICOLL. edidit, &c. E. B. PUSEY 1835. folio. £2 4s.

DEVOTIONAL WORKS.

ADAPTED TO THE USE OF THE ENGLISH CHURCH, EDITED BY THE REV. E. B. PUSEY, D.D.

A GUIDE for PASSING ADVENT HOLILY. By AVRILLON. With Frontispiece. 6s.

The SPIRITUAL COMBAT, and the SUPPLEMENT: with the PATH of PARADISE; or, the PEACE of the SOUL. By SCUPOLI. (From the Italian.) With Frontispiece. 3s. 6d.

The YEAR of AFFECTIONS. Or Sentiments on the Love of God, drawn from the Canticles, for every day in the year. By AVRILLON. 6s. 6s.

The FOUNDATIONS of the SPIRITUAL LIFE. (A Commentary on Thomas a Kempis.) By SURIN. 4s. 6d.

A GUIDE for PASSING LENT HOLILY. By AVRILLON. Second Edition. With Frontispiece. 7s.

PARADISE for the CHRISTIAN SOUL. By HORST. 2 vols. 6s. 6d. *The Litanies*, chiefly from Holy Scripture, separately. 6d.

The LIFE of JESUS CHRIST, in GLORY. Daily Meditations from Easter Day to the Wednesday after Trinity Sunday. By NOUET. 8s.

Preparing for the Press,

S. ANSELM'S MEDITATIONS and PRAYERS to GOD the FATHER, SON, and HOLY GHOST. (A very small portion of the Meditations was published by Dean Stanhope.)

S. FRANCOIS DE SALES INTRODUCTION to a DEVOUT LIFE.

14,248

283-252
P77

Pusey, Edward Bouverie

AUTHOR

Sermons During the Season from Ad-

TITLE vent to Whitsuntide.

14,248

ST. ALBERT'S COLLEGE LIBRARY